

THE CANON TABLES OF THE
CODEX BENEVENTANUS
AND RELATED DECORATION

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Dedicated to Carl Nordenfalk, on the occasion of his retirement from the University of Pittsburgh, in gratitude for his participation in American university life.

“LATE antique original” or “Carolingian copy” is a dilemma which constantly haunts specialists in both periods. Several ivories have been sent back and forth across this Great Divide, and in recent years at least one manuscript has made the journey. In 1937 Carl Nordenfalk argued that one bifolium in the Vatican—now sadly damaged, stained by fungus, and bound backward as flyleaves to an Ottonian Sacramentary from Fulda—is a fragment of a magnificent set of Canon Tables made in Italy around the middle of the sixth century (figs. 20–23).¹ On the other hand, the purple leaf in the Xanten Gospels, which was once claimed as an ancient fragment reused in Carolingian times, must certainly be assigned to the workshop of the Vienna Schatzkammer Gospels and dated to the very end of the eighth century.² Now I have another candidate for the sixth century, and I hope to show that it satisfies Nordenfalk’s requirements.³ The argument involves technical details concerning the text and arrangement of the Canon Tables, and the pigments used to decorate them, but the final decision depends on stylistic analysis of the ornament and comparison with dated examples. This requires examining both the minutiae and the total coherence of several versions of classical architectural ornament.

The Codex Beneventanus in the British Museum is a large Gospel Book, with pages of nearly eleven by fourteen inches (355 x 275 mm.), written in elaborately artificial uncial script;⁴ it has small decorated initials at the beginning of each Gospel (figs. 12–15), and a set of Canon Tables at the front of the book (figs. 1–7). Modern paleography would easily assign such script and initials to the eighth century (possibly with a little margin at either end) and attribute the book to some important Italian center. But in fact it has long been recognized that the colophon at the end of the book (folio 239^v) yields specific data.⁵ It begins *praecepto pii patris atoni obtemperans exiguus monachus lupus/ beati hieronimi labore translatus evangeliorum scripsi librū. . . .* An Atto was

¹ Vatican, lat. 3806, folios 1 and 2. Carl Nordenfalk, *Vier Kanonestafeln eines spätantiken Evangelienbuches*, Göteborgs Kungl. Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets-Samhälles, Handlingar, ser. A, vol. VI, 5, 5th ser. (1937).

² Brussels, MS 18723, folio 17^r. Wilhelm Koehler, *Die Karolingischen Miniaturen*, III (Berlin, 1960), 21, 91–92.

³ Delicate decisions of connoisseurship like this are not easy. I must confess that I was not convinced when I first read Nordenfalk’s article, and I noted that Henri Stern was not convinced either, preferring to date the Vatican fragment in the eighth century, shortly before the Codex Beneventanus: *Le calendrier de 354*, Institut français d’archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, LV (Paris, 1953), 335. When I first studied the Vatican fragment in 1957 I was uncertain, but inclined to prefer a Carolingian date; after prolonged study in 1959, however, considerations of style and of painting technique convinced me of the early date, which has been accepted also by Elias A. Lowe and Bernhard Bischoff: *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (Oxford, 1934–71) (hereafter Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*), Suppl. (1971), no. 1766.

⁴ London, British Museum, Additional MS 5463. Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, II (1935), no. 162; Carl Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln* (Göteborg, 1938) (hereafter Nordenfalk, *Kanontafeln*), 177–78, etc., pls. 52–57.

⁵ *Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts in the British Museum*, II: *Latin* (London, 1884), 18–19.

abbot of San Vincenzo al Volturno from 739 to 760;⁶ the name is not very rare, but the identification is plausible for the generalized attribution of the book, and gains confirmation from the fact that there are annotations in tenth-century Beneventan script on folios 222^r and 229^r, and on folio 76^v a later inventory of the books owned by St. Peter's in Benevento.⁷ Given this presumption of a home in the Beneventan area the identification of Abbot Ato becomes virtually inevitable, and we may consider it established that the Codex Beneventanus was written in San Vincenzo between 739 and 760.

The abbey of San Vincenzo was founded early in the eighth century and quickly became one of the major cultural centers of the Beneventan region. It is best known to art historians for the remarkable surviving frescoes executed for Abbot Epiphanius (826–43), but we should realize that these decorate the crypt of what was only a minor chapel of a foundation with about five hundred monks.⁸ It is to be expected that such a center might produce a sumptuous Gospel Book, even in this dark period of Italian history; and these rather modest initials (figs. 12–15), with panels of simple twist motif, are just what we would expect such a book to contain. The elaborate and skillful uncial script (fig. 9), with its accented triangular serifs on letters such as C, E, F, G, S, X, is more surprising, but not beyond the range of plausibility. The Canon Tables (figs. 1–7), however, differ radically from the initials. They form a separate gathering of parchment, consisting of two single leaves followed by one bifolium, and there are many technical indications that their illumination was a separate undertaking. Their date must be determined ultimately on the basis of stylistic criteria.⁹

I.

Let us begin by examining the arrangement of the Canon Tables as written. We will find that they were written substantially after they were decorated,

⁶ Vincenzo Federici, "Ricerche per l'edizione del 'Chronicon Vulturnense' del monaco Giovanni. II. Gli abati," *BISI*, 57 (1941), 71–87, esp. 86.

⁷ The script of this inventory has been dated to the thirteenth century by Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, II (1935), no. 162; this would make it probable that the nunnery of St. Peter referred to is the one which was subject to San Vincenzo, but was suppressed in 1294. Dating the inventory to the fifteenth century, the editors of the *Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts* had to reject this identification, and propose instead a different nunnery of St. Peter not known to have specific connections with San Vincenzo (*op. cit.*, 19). Since the script is not easy to date, and the later date is not unreasonable, it seems wise not to press the tempting implications for the medieval provenience allowed by Lowe's early date, a provenience which would help to confirm the origin of the book at San Vincenzo.

⁸ Pietro Toesca, "Reliquie d'arte della badia di S. Vincenzo al Volturno," *BISI*, 25 (1904), 1–84; Mario del Treppo, "Longobardi, Franchi e Papato in due secoli di storia vulturnese," *ASINap*, 73 (1955), 37–59; Hans Belting, "Studien zum Beneventanischen Hof im 8. Jahrhundert," *DOP*, 16 (1962), 141–93.

⁹ I first reached the conclusion presented here while examining the manuscript in 1959, but, mindful of the tenuous nature of such an opinion and of my own initial uncertainty concerning the Vatican fragment, I delayed publication. Repeated study of the manuscript in subsequent years through 1967 confirmed my opinion, and further delay in publication has been the result of preoccupation with other concerns rather than any remaining doubt. Early in my considerations I discussed the issue with several friends, among them Hans Belting, and I was glad to see that first he considered my view (in *DOP*, 16, p. 174 note 261) and then he was inclined to accept it (in "Probleme der Kunstgeschichte Italiens im Frühmittelalter," *FrMSt*, 1 [1967], 104).

by a scribe who did not understand the tabular arrangement. The recto of folio 1 was covered (probably in the eighteenth century) by pasting down on it a sheet of modern vellum, presumably to strengthen the damaged page; but when the page is viewed against the light there is no trace of any writing or decoration on the original recto now covered over, and so we may assume that folio 1^r was always blank. Folio 1^v (fig. 1) has six decorated columns, defining five tabular spaces between them; but obviously no concordance of passages in the four Gospels would normally use five parallel columns of numbers. Therefore, the scribe has crowded the bulk of the first Canon (listing the passages common to all four Gospels) into the first four spaces, in the usual way, and then used the fifth space for the spillover, in four groups of numbers, completing the first Canon on this first page. At the bottom of each of the first four columns he has made a *signe de renvoie*, which is repeated at the top of each group of numbers in the fifth column; thus, the reader can find his way, even though finding the numbers of corresponding passages in the last part is not as simple as it is in the usual layout.

Using the same system on folio 2^r (fig. 2), the scribe has compressed the whole of the long second Canon (passages common to the three synoptic Gospels) onto one page, with the beginning of the Canon in the three columns at the left and the spillover in two at the right. Folio 2^v (fig. 3) and each of the remaining pages have five decorated columns which define four tabular spaces. The scribe began by writing the third and fourth Canons, each of which involves passages in three Gospels, in the first three columns. Near the bottom of the page he began the fifth Canon, which involves only two Gospels; he soon reached the bottom of the frame and drew a *signe de renvoie* in each column, but he had spaced the lines differently in the various columns, and so had written twenty-five numbers in the first column, but only twenty in the second. He continued his first set of numbers in the third column, below the fifth Canon, but did not finish them there, drew another *signe de renvoie* and finished this set of numbers at the top of the fourth column. The rest of the fourth column contains the continuation of the second column, very compressed, so as to finish this fifth Canon on folio 2^v. Although the whole Canon is recorded and the numerals are generally correct, the arrangement makes it extremely difficult to identify corresponding passages. The purpose of the Table is effectively negated.

Folio 3^r (fig. 4) was easier to arrange. The sixth and seventh Canons are written in the first two columns, the eighth and ninth in the second two. Then the first part of the tenth Canon, the list of passages unique to St. Matthew, follows with only slight crowding in the remaining space of the third and fourth columns. On folio 3^v (fig. 5) the other three sections of the tenth Canon are easily concluded within the first three columns; the fourth column and the next two pages (figs. 6, 7) are left blank, although this fourth column and the first two columns of folio 4^r were ruled for numerals.

It is perfectly clear that the scribe who wrote the numerals did not understand the principles of the architectural enframing for Canon Tables,

where the frame is intended to match the intrinsic arrangement of the columns of numbers. Instead, he sought to compress his set of numbers into the absolute minimum of space; he must have copied them off column by column, since only that procedure would account for the serious failure of horizontal correspondence on folio 2^v. It is also clear that the scribe of these numerals was the scribe of the main book (Lupus), since both the numerals and the titles in the Canons are identical with corresponding features of the same size in the main book. The numerals (fig. 10) should be compared with the small numerals which record the section numbers and parallel passages in the main book (cf. figs. 13, 15), noting particularly the curved third stroke of the X; and the uncial forms of the titles may be compared with the slightly larger uncial script of the main text, noting the shape of the A and the distinctive triangular serifs already mentioned. Parallels for the capital forms in the titles of the Canons can be found among the colophons of the main text (note the shape of the capitals A and T in fig. 9), but there they are very much longer.

It follows that the architectural ornament is not the work of Lupus. Indeed, there is good reason to suppose that it was executed considerably before his time. Not only did Lupus fail to understand the rationale of the arcades, but in ruling lines for his numerals he damaged some of the ornament. This is clearest on folio 4^v (fig. 8), where much of the paint of the two columns at the right has flaked off where the line was ruled on the recto; above this area, where the recto was ruled for part of the design of the arch before it was painted, the ruling also shows distinctly on the verso, but the paint over this ruling has neither flaked off nor worn particularly. When Lupus ruled his lines the paint must have been quite brittle, and one wonders how old the ornament would have to be to flake off this way.

There is also an important difference in the pigments used in the two campaigns.¹⁰ Both for his titles in the Canon Tables and for his initials in the main book Lupus used minium for red and verdigris for green; in the initials he also used a little of the bright yellow pigment orpiment and a number of small patches of gold leaf. Minium and verdigris are the most common pigments in eighth-century Continental manuscripts; orpiment is less common outside the Insular sphere of influence, but its presence is not unreasonable. The use of gold leaf is a symptom of the high standard of this scriptorium, and the importance of this undertaking.

The palette of the decoration of the Canon Tables, on the other hand, is very much more complicated; pigments were often mixed to give a gradation of colors, and so can be very difficult to identify. One of the red pigments used is probably minium (to judge by the way it has discolored in most of the bands

¹⁰ On the identification of pigments used in early medieval manuscripts, see Heinz Roosen-Runge and Alfred E. A. Werner, in *Codex Lindisfarnensis*, ed. Thomas D. Kendrick et al., II (Olten, 1960), 261–77; Stephan Waetzold, "Systematisches Verzeichnis der Farbnamen," *MünchJb*, 3rd ser., 3–4 (1952–53), 150–58; Heinz Roosen-Runge, "Die Buchmalereirezepte des Theophilus," *ibid.*, 159–71; David H. Wright, *The Vespasian Psalter*, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile, XIV (Copenhagen, 1967), 19–22; Heinz Roosen-Runge, *Farbgebung und Technik frühmittelalterlicher Buchmalerei* (Munich, 1967), especially the technical data in vol. II.

outlining the major arches), but compared to the minium in the titles on the same pages it has a different and more granular appearance, suggesting that it was prepared differently. The Canon Tables also include a good deal of gold leaf and a few touches of orpiment, but no verdigris; and they include many pigments not found in the work of Lupus. In fact, the pigments and techniques of painting used for these Canon Tables are essentially the same as those used in the fragmentary sixth-century Vatican Canon Tables, including ultramarine, ocher, cinnabar, and certain white, green, and violet pigments not readily identifiable.

It is clear that the illumination of the arcades in the Codex Beneventanus was a separate undertaking, and on technical grounds it seems likely that this was carried out substantially before Lupus wrote the main manuscript and also the numbers and titles of the Canon Tables, using only part of the available arcades. Before we consider independently the likely date of this illumination, it is appropriate to reconsider the purpose for which these pages were originally intended. The space available between columns is only 30 mm., and therefore most likely designed for tables of numbers or individual words, rather than for texts made up of short units, such as chapter lists or glossaries. It is possible that some other kind of computistic tables, such as Easter tables, were intended, but Canon Tables for the Gospels are certainly what one most expects to find decorated this way in the late antique tradition. There is nothing distinctive in the layout of the illumination to suggest any other variety of computistica, but there is a serious problem in using these frames for Canon Tables, as is readily apparent from the following diagram:

blank		H
five intercolumniations	(begin Canon I)	1
five intercolumniations	(end Canon I)	F
four intercolumniations	(begin Canon II)	2
four intercolumniations	(continue Canon II)	H
four intercolumniations	(end Canon II)	3
four intercolumniations	(Canon III)	F
four intercolumniations	(Canon IV)	4
} (leaves probably cancelled by Lupus)		

The first two pages have five intercolumniations, but there are only four Gospels to be compared in the first Canon Table.¹¹ It would be possible to arrange the last two or three Canon Tables (with lists of passages in two Gospels,

¹¹ The text of the Canon Tables is conveniently available in John Wordsworth and Henry J. White, *Nouum Testamentum Latine*, Editio minor (Oxford, 1911), xvii–xx; for data on the arrangement to be expected here, see Nordenfalk, *Kanontafeln*, esp. Beilage B.

or unique to one Gospel) conveniently on pages with five intercolumniations, but folio 1^r was originally blank, and if the sheet is folded backward on its surviving stub the blank page must interrupt the sequence of illuminated pages. Furthermore, the present arrangement of the flesh and hair surfaces of parchment gives the expected sequence of flesh facing flesh and hair facing hair. Folio 1^v must, therefore, have been the start of the sequence of illumination as originally intended, and we must accept the anomaly of having two pages of five intercolumniations followed by five pages of four intercolumniations. The first recto may have been left blank deliberately for protection, as a kind of extra flyleaf, and also to bring the two pages planned with five intercolumniations together as a pair facing each other. This would allow the first Canon Table to be presented complete in one opening. If that was the intention we could suppose that the extra intercolumniation on each page was to be used for a colophon. The long text of the second Canon Table requires three pages in the normal layout, each with three columns of numbers, but each of the available pages has four intercolumniations, and the first of them, folio 2^v, is inevitably the next in order after folio 2^r (with its five intercolumniations). It is possible to suppose that the extra intercolumniation on the first and third pages would have been used for colophons, but the extra one on the second page appears to have been useless. Canons three and four are short, each requiring one page with three columns of numbers. The extra intercolumniations on each of the pages apparently available for them (the recto and verso of folio 4) could have been used for a colophon, but there could not have been separate colophons at the beginning and end of the Canon Table, as was implicitly the arrangement for the first and second Canons. It must be admitted that planning one extra intercolumniation on each page was not convenient.

In the normal arrangement of Canon Tables on twelve pages, as implicit, for example, in the sixth-century Vatican fragment, the next three pages contain Canon Tables comparing two Gospels, and their illumination therefore allows four intercolumniations to accommodate the numbers in two sets of paired columns. We can suppose that the leaves formerly conjoint with folios 1 and 2 continued the sequence of arcades, but it becomes idle speculation to attempt to decide whether following the apparent principle of the extra intercolumniation the next pages each provided three, five, or six intercolumniations. If five or six, it would have been possible to arrange the full text of the Canon Tables conveniently within eleven pages, finishing within the ternion of parchment which the surviving folios imply. But six intercolumniations would not fit properly on the pages as presently trimmed, and five would require that the extra intercolumniation be used for colophons for different Canons, at least on the eighth page, which would normally contain Canons six, seven, and eight. Clearly the implicit arrangement with the spare intercolumniation designed for luxurious display would work well only for the first Canon Table. That fact may be the key to understanding what happened. An artist thinking in terms of bigger and better illuminated arcades set out to plan a sequence

of Canon Tables of unusual luxury. He deliberately started on a verso to enhance the effect of the first opening, but he did not realize all the difficulties in the subsequent arrangement, as I have just rehearsed them. Before a scribe actually wrote the necessary numbers, a more practical supervisor must have realized the difficulties and set aside the illuminated leaves. At some later date the leaves came into the hands of Lupus, who wrote the necessary numbers without understanding the arrangement intended by the illuminator.

II.

If we retain the traditional eighth-century date for the illumination of the Canon Tables of the Codex Beneventanus, while admitting that the painting was completed substantially before Lupus wrote the numerals (necessarily between 739 and 760), we must admit that this illumination shows an extraordinary survival of late antique technique and style. Therefore, it is important to compare it with other examples of such a survival. Very few Italian manuscripts of the period show anything comparable, but there is a Gospel Book in the Vatican (Vat. lat. 5465) which is remarkable for a partial survival of such traditions, and which is clearly a homogeneous work. There is no evidence for a specific date or localization for the book, but it may be considered central Italian work of the period around 800.¹² Its script and initials (fig. 19) are generally analogous to those of the Codex Beneventanus, and its illumination employs the same pigments and techniques (gold leaf, orpiment, minium, verdigris), with the addition in a few columns of the Canon Tables of a red (possibly cinnabar) and a purple. The decorative vocabulary of knots of interlace, bits of leafage, and small panels of plain gold leaf is also similar to that of the initials in the Codex Beneventanus, if a little more elaborate. This is what one would expect in a luxurious eighth-century Italian manuscript. In one aspect, however, the Canon Tables of Vat. lat. 5465 (figs. 16–18) are remarkable examples of direct classical survival in Italy. They still follow the original architectural logic in their construction and arrangement. Each page has three or four intercolumniations, according to the requirements of the Table to be written there, and the distribution of the Tables follows exactly the old standard twelve-page system defined by Nordenfalk.¹³ Furthermore, the architectural “structure” follows the old rules, using a standard width of intercolumniation (40 mm.) and letting that module determine different sizes for the enclosing arch, depending on whether it encloses three or four intercolumniations.

Both the sixth-century Vatican fragment (Vat. lat. 3806) and the Codex Beneventanus follow the same structural logic, and both use the same 40 mm.

¹² Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, I (1934), no. 24; Nordenfalk, *Kanontafeln*, 175, 193, 218, pl. 58; Bernhard Bischoff, in “Panorama der Handschriftenüberlieferung aus der Zeit Karls des Grossen,” in *Karl der Grosse*, II (Düsseldorf, 1965), 253. The capitulary at the end of the manuscript follows the purely Roman type A, which evolved around 740 and subsequently was used in the Court School of Charlemagne. See Theodor Klauser, *Das Römische Capitulare Evangeliorum* (Münster, 1935), lxiv, no. 343.

¹³ Nordenfalk, *Kanontafeln*, 171–73, and appendix B.

module for the intercolumniation. All three of these books also observe the practice of using the same ruled lines for the top and bottom of the columns on both sides of the leaf, but deliberately use different rulings in placing the columns laterally, with the result that where a column is painted on the recto the verso will be blank. Classicizing books of the eighth and ninth centuries normally follow a different procedure, as Nordenfalk has demonstrated.¹⁴ Normally, the enclosing arch is planned first and made to correspond exactly on recto and verso; then the intercolumniations are allowed to vary in size when the enclosed width is divided into three or four units.

There is also a symptom of early practice in the text of the Canon Tables of Vat. lat. 5465. Originally a cross was placed above the name of each Evangelist at the start of a Table, and the abbreviation *IT* (for *item*) above each name in any columns which continued the text of that Table; this system is followed consistently in the sixth-century Vatican fragment (figs. 20–23).¹⁵ In Vat. lat. 5465 the cross is not used, but *IT* does occur occasionally, as on folio 5^v (fig. 16), where it identifies the continuation of the first Canon. It is not always used when it should be, however, since it should appear over the fourth column on folio 9^v (fig. 18),¹⁶ and it is used wrongly once, on folio 9^r, where it appears in the first column, at the start of the sixth Canon.

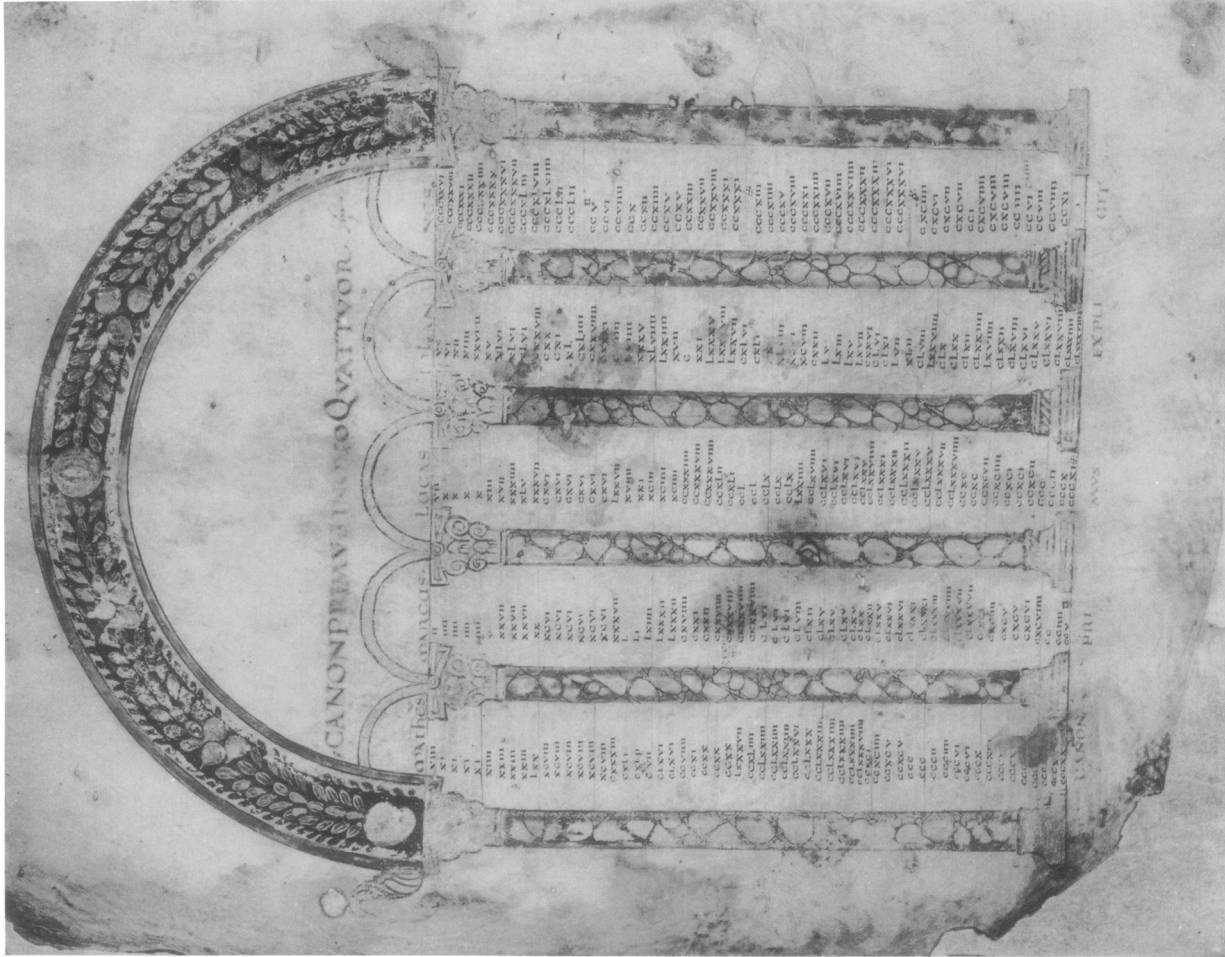
Considering these important symptoms of continuity in scribal procedure, the lack of classical style in the ornament of Vat. lat. 5465 is all the more striking. The capitals still depend on classical types, but they are simplified and partly corrupted, particularly in the abacus. The sixth-century Vatican fragments show the typical conventionalized form found in late antique decoration (figs. 20–23), where the abacus is decorated with a pair of long isosceles triangles pointing at a central rosette, and where the abacus has an inconspicuous sloping lower boundary parallel to the lower sides of the triangles. In Vat. lat. 5465 the three central capitals on folio 5^v (fig. 16), for example, show a fairly close copy of this type, but with a straight lower boundary for the abacus, and an extra row of leafage added at the bottom of the bell. There is also a variation on this type, as on folio 6^r (fig. 17), where the abacus is almost vestigial, where what had been the outer leaves of the bottom row on the bell become part of the volutes, and where rosettes are added to the incorrectly doubled astragals at the top of the columns. Still another corruption of the classical capital is apparent on folio 9^v (fig. 18), where the abacus is decorated with three debased rosettes.

Nor does the Italian artist of Vat. lat. 5465 do any better in depicting the bases of the columns. The sixth-century fragment consistently shows a scheme in which the curving scotia makes a transition between the plinth and a pair of tori (figs. 20–23). The general shape of this scheme is repeated in the Italian bases on folio 5^v (fig. 16), but with incorrect internal articulation; the simple panel on the flat face of the plinth and the ring around the scotia (probably

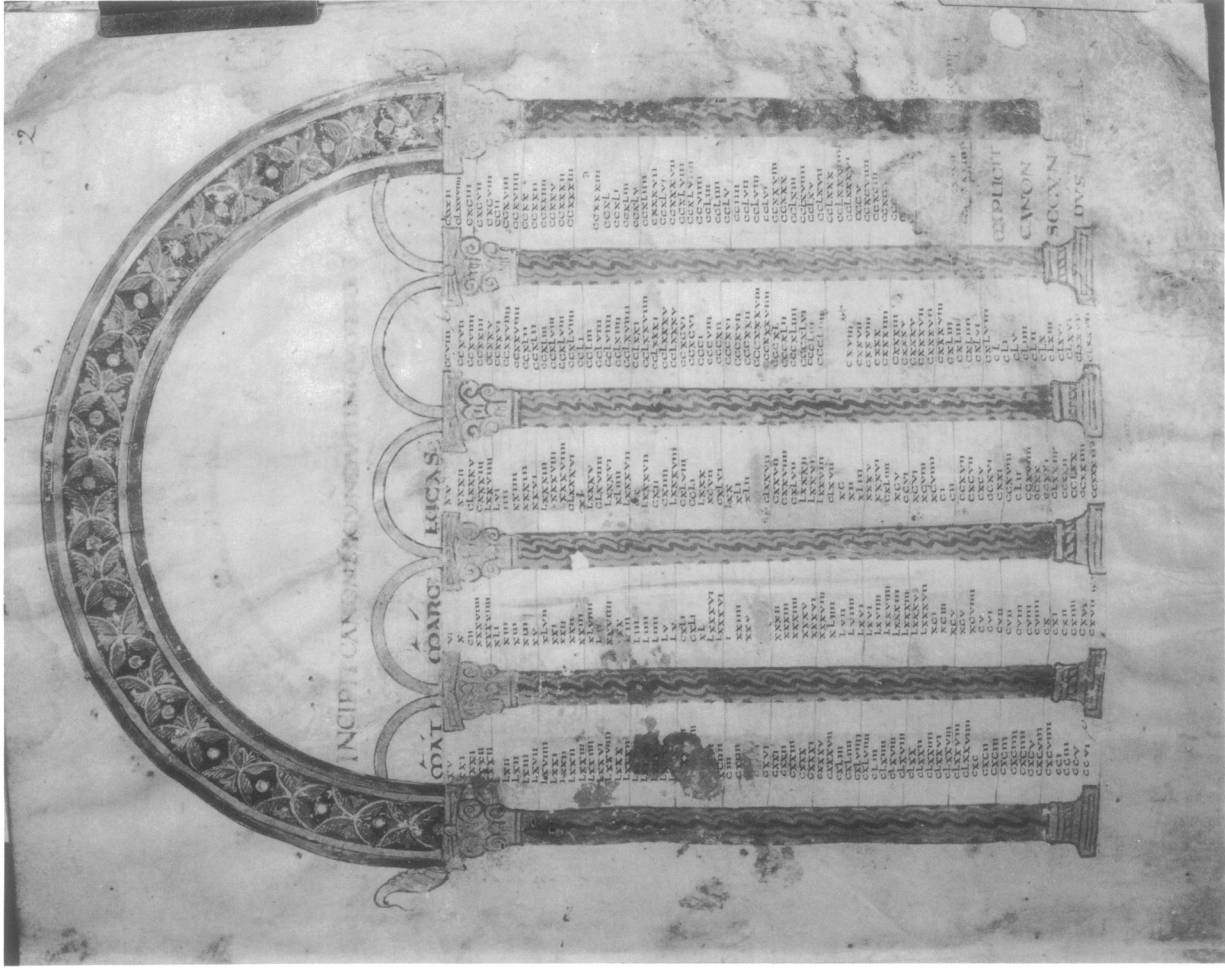
¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 180–82.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 193.

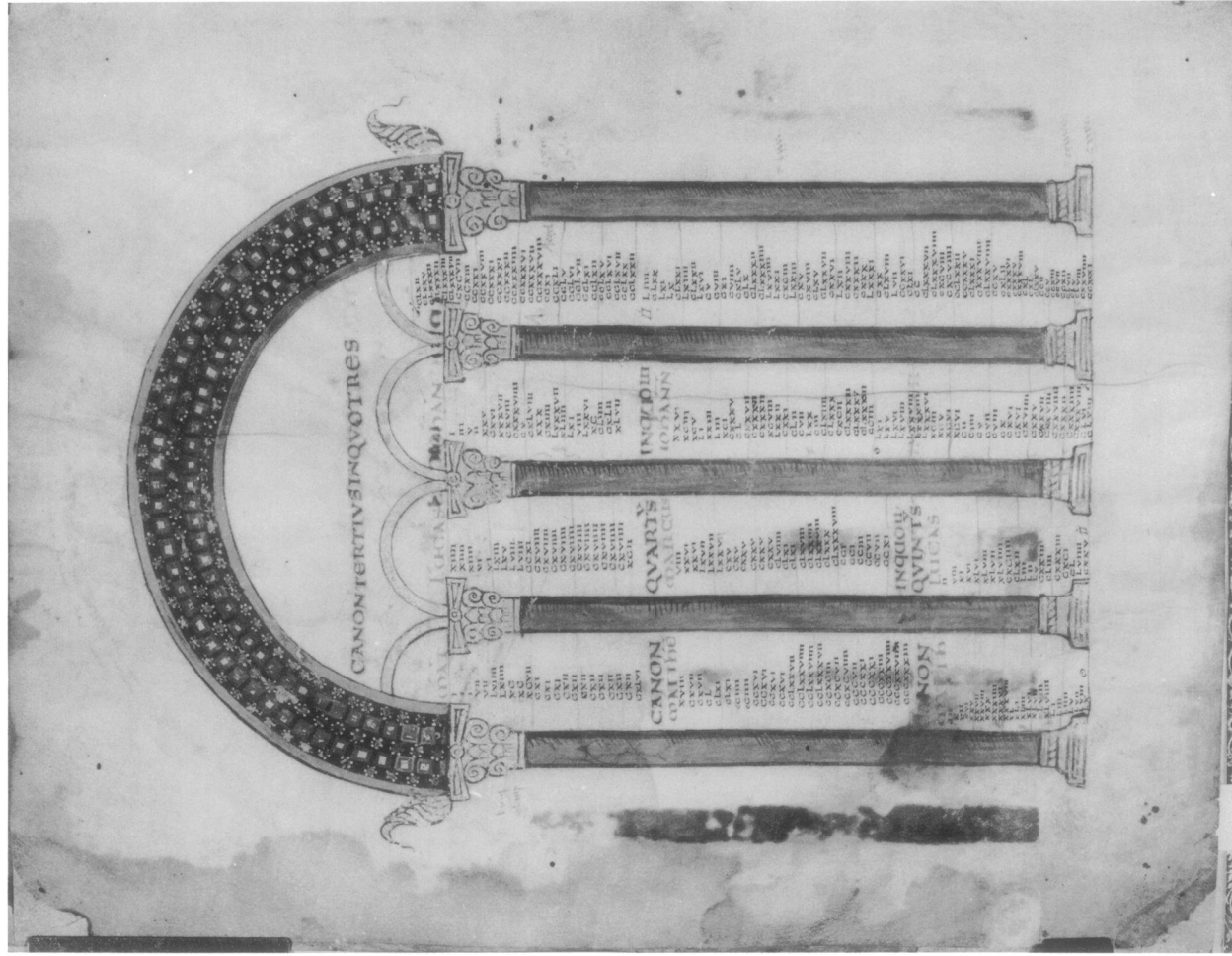
¹⁶ The *IT* sign is used correctly on folios 5^v and 7^r; it is omitted on folios 6^v, 8^v, 9^v, 10^r, 10^v.



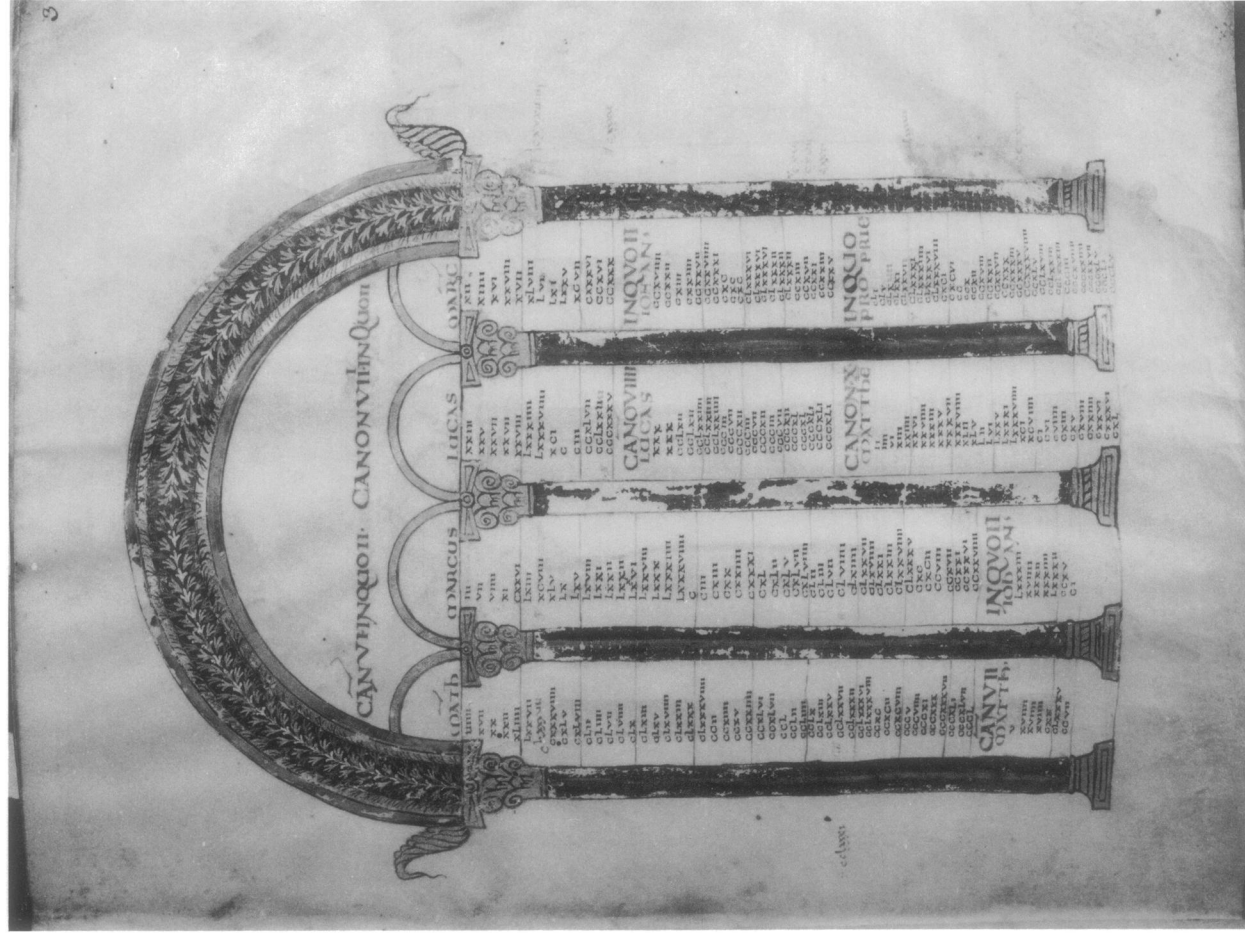
1. Fol. 1v



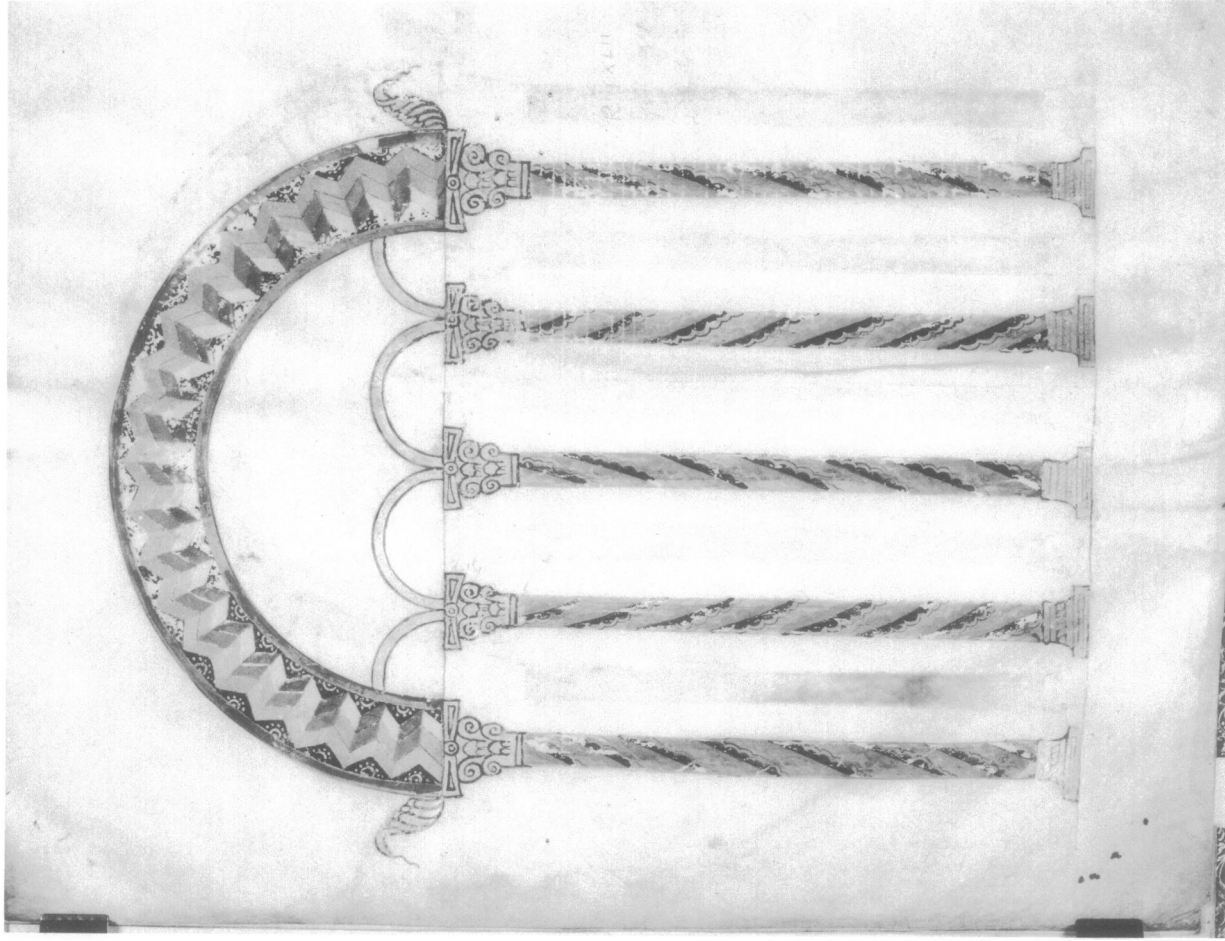
2. Fol. 2r



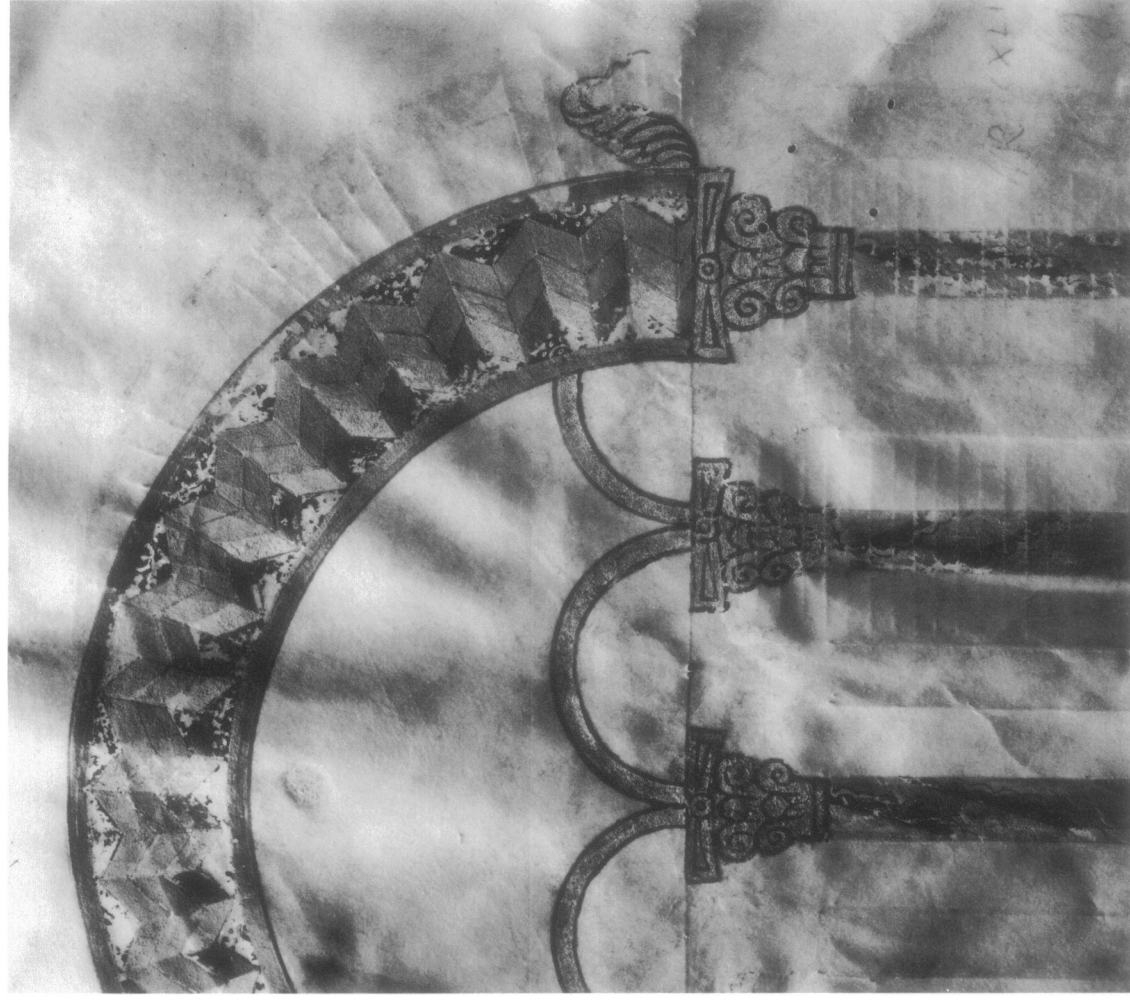
3. Fol. 2v



4. Fol. 3r



7. Fol. 4v



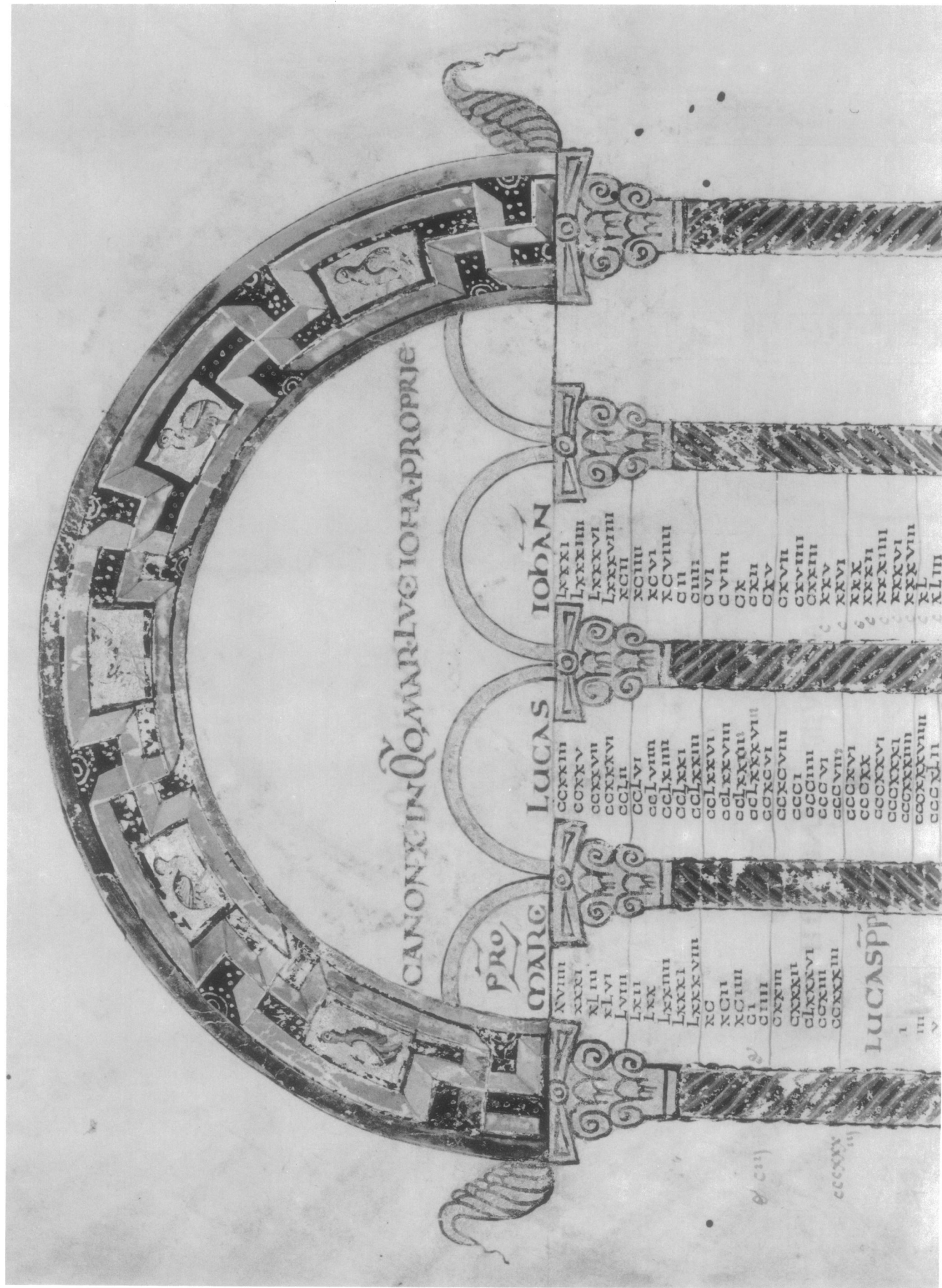
8. Detail of fol. 4v by raking light

117
SUPER NEGROS MANUS
IMPONERENT ET BENE
HABEBUNT
ET DOMINUS QUIDEM POSTquam
LOCUTUS EST IIS
AD SUMPTUS EST IN
CAELUM, ET SEDIT
AD DEXTERIS DOMINI

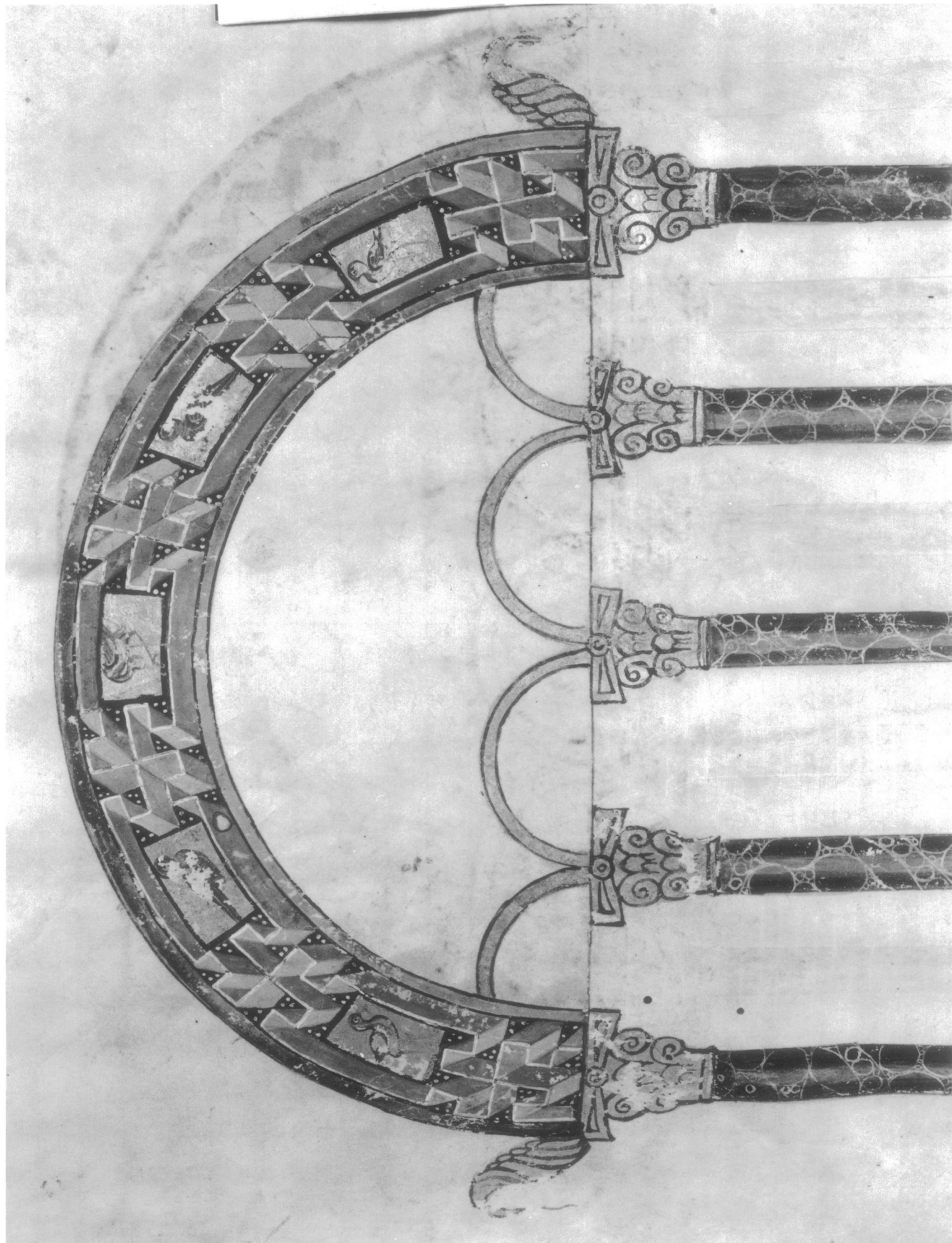
EXPLICIT
EUANGELIUM
SECUNDUM
MARCUM

ILLI AUTEM PERFECTI
PRAEDICAVERUNT
UBIQUE
DOMINUS COOPERANTE
ET SERMO
CONFIRMANTE
SEQUENTIBUS
SIGNIS

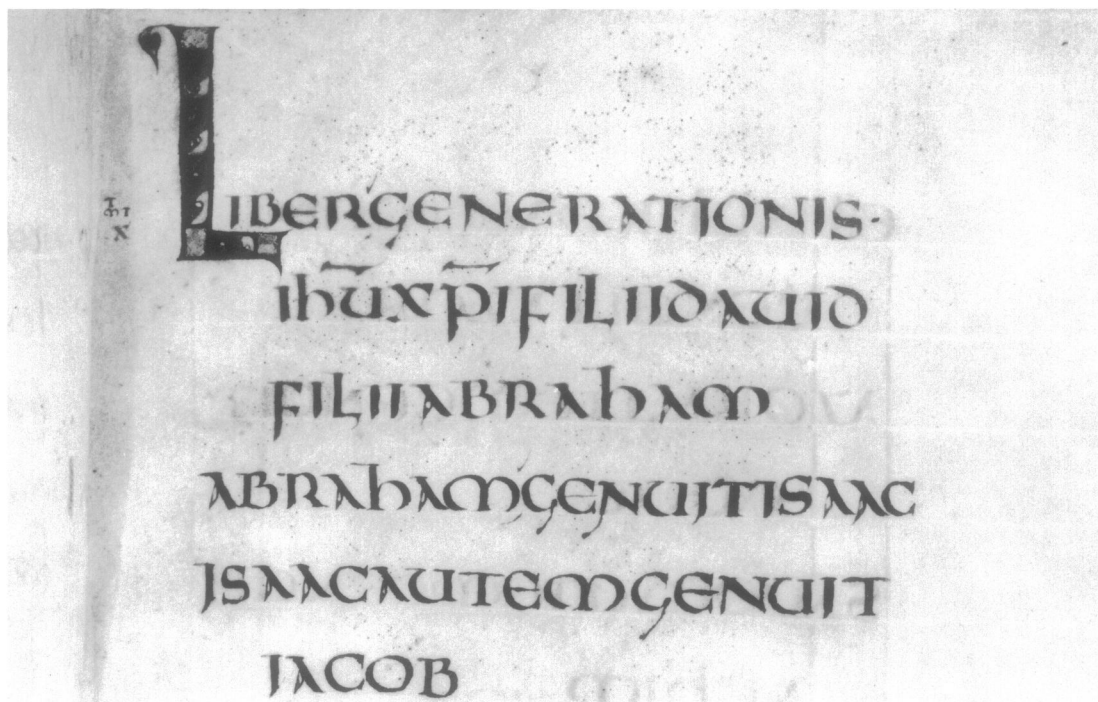
INCIPIT
SECUNDUM
LUCAM
DOMINUS GRATIAS



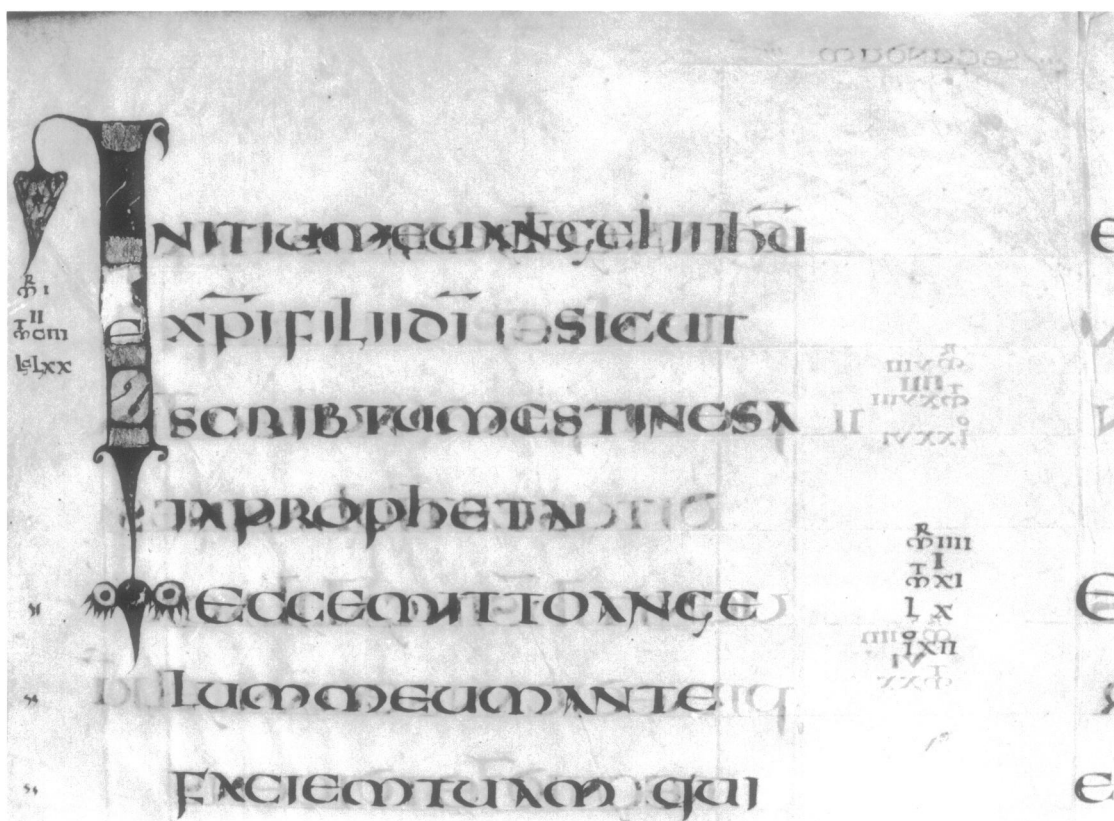
10. Codex Beneventanus, fol. 3v (actual size), detail



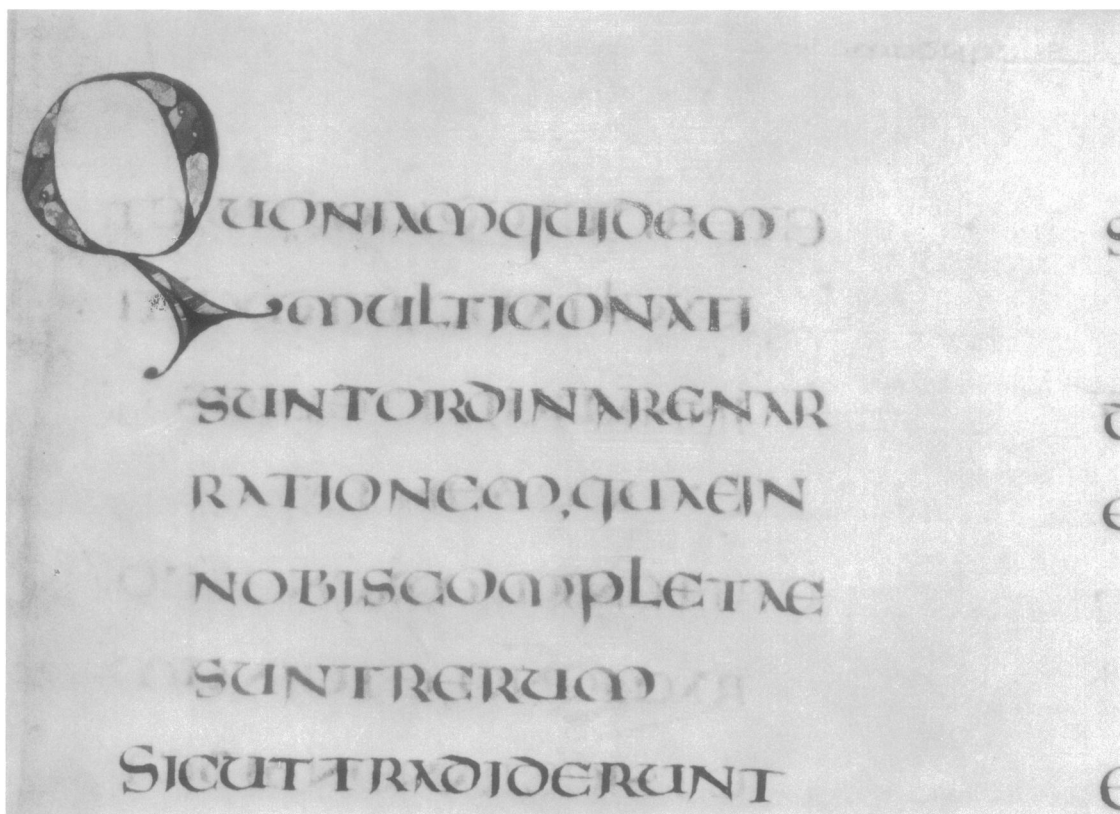
11. Codex Beneventanus, fol. 4r (actual size), detail



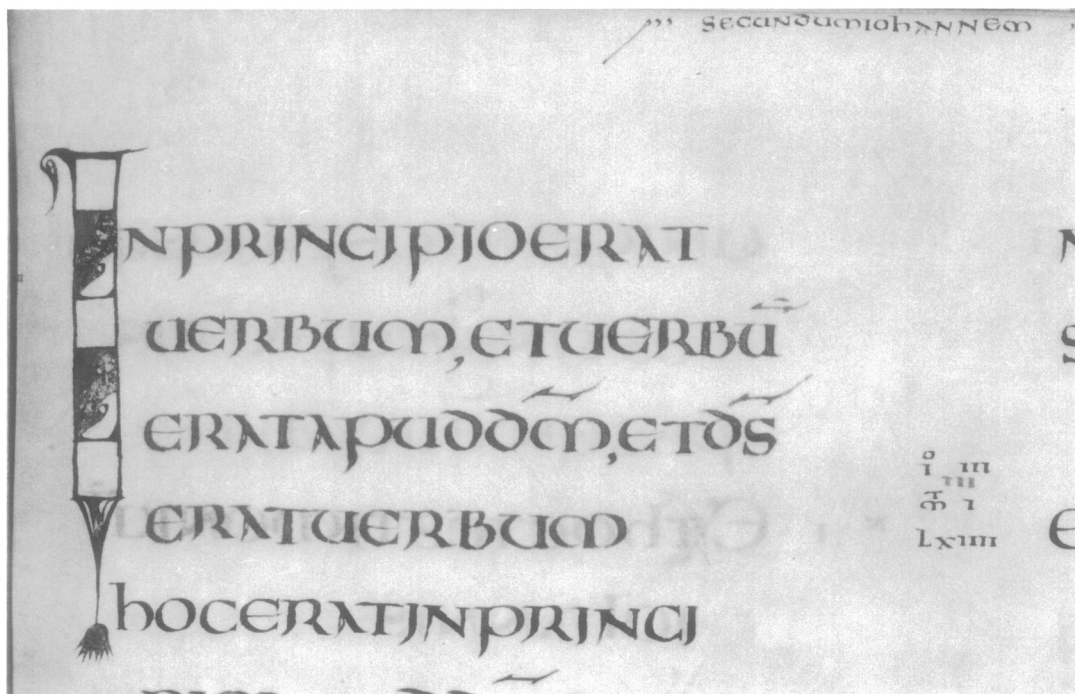
12. Fol. 12r, Initial (actual size)



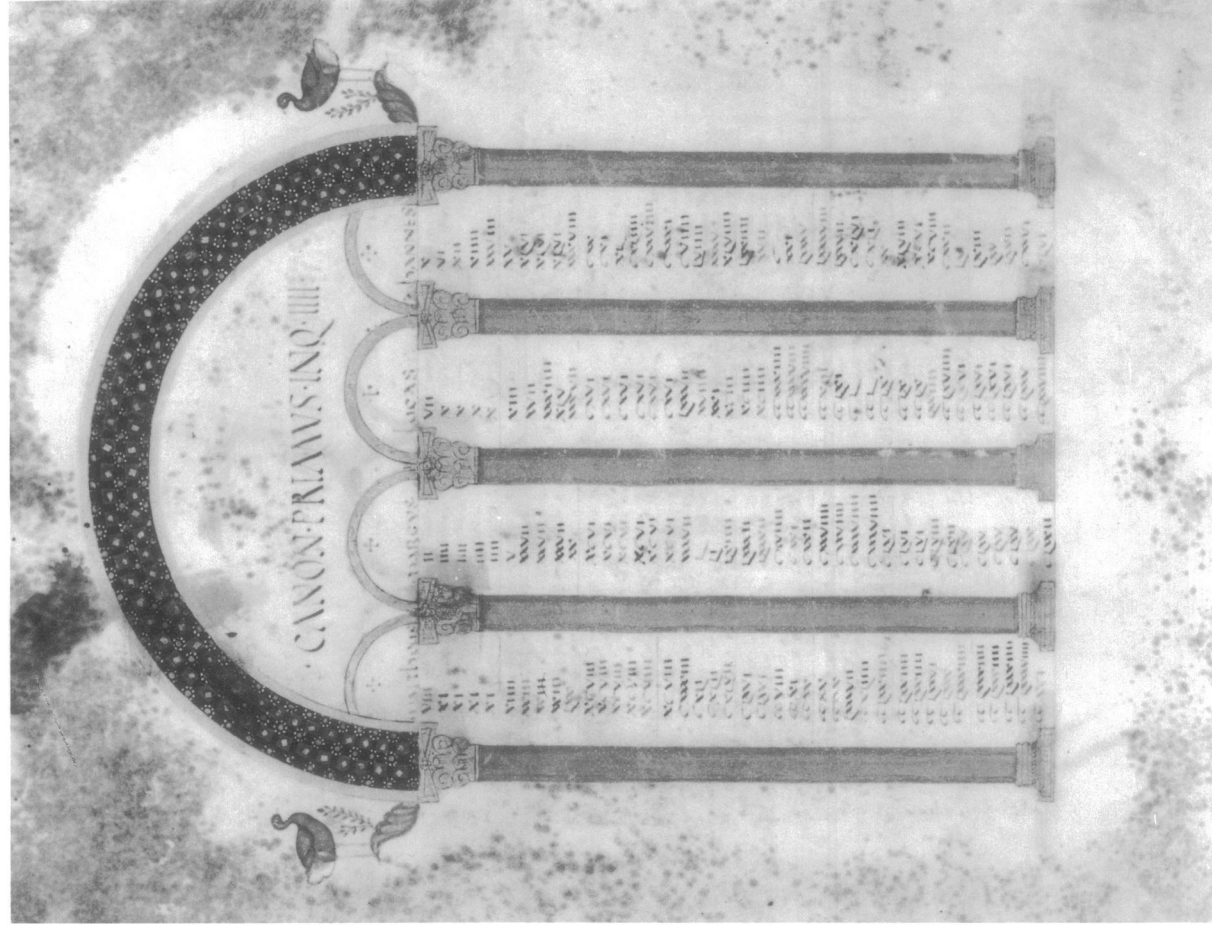
13. Fol. 77r, Initial (actual size)



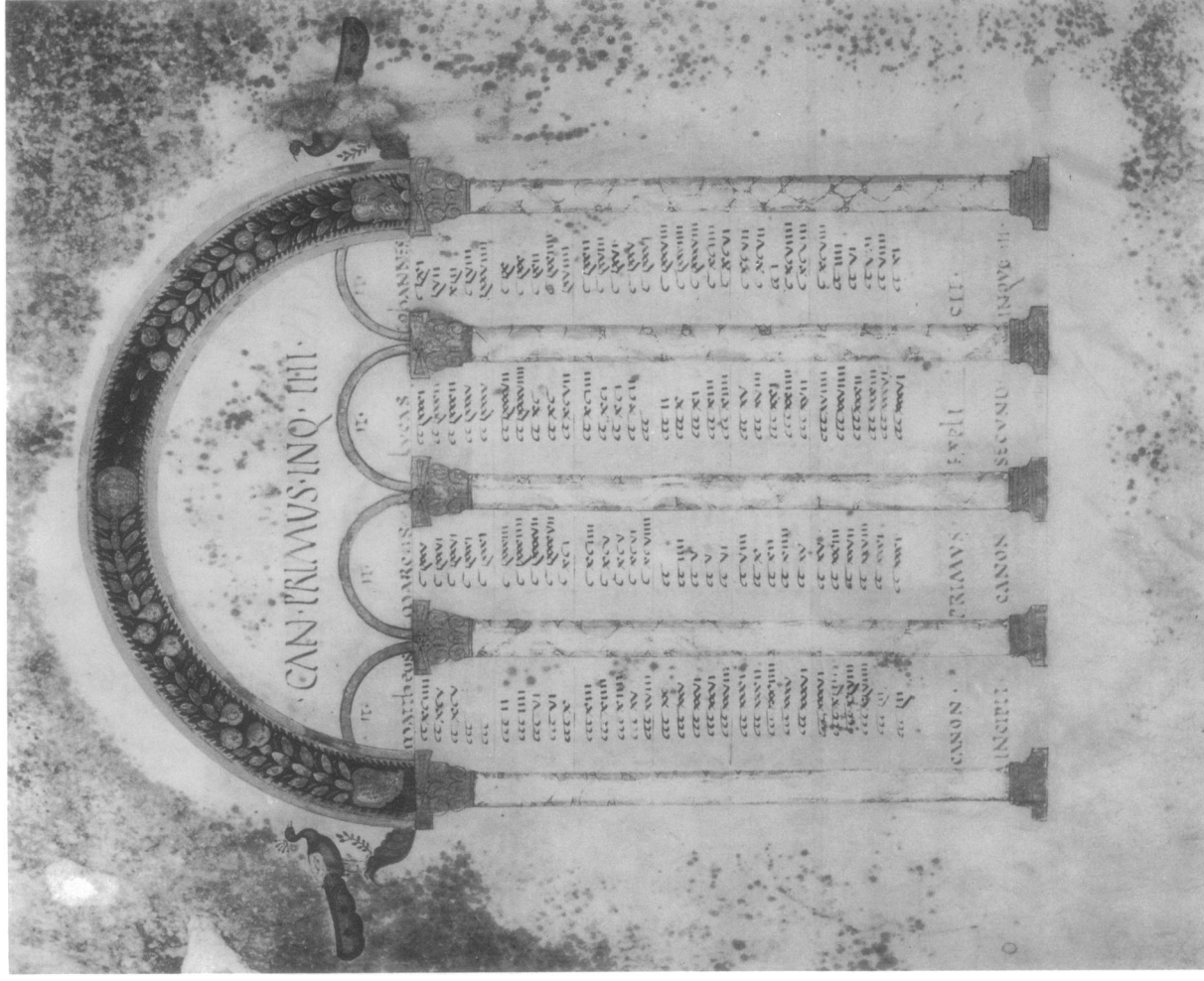
14. Fol. 121^r, Initial (actual size)



15. Fol. 191^r, Initial (actual size)

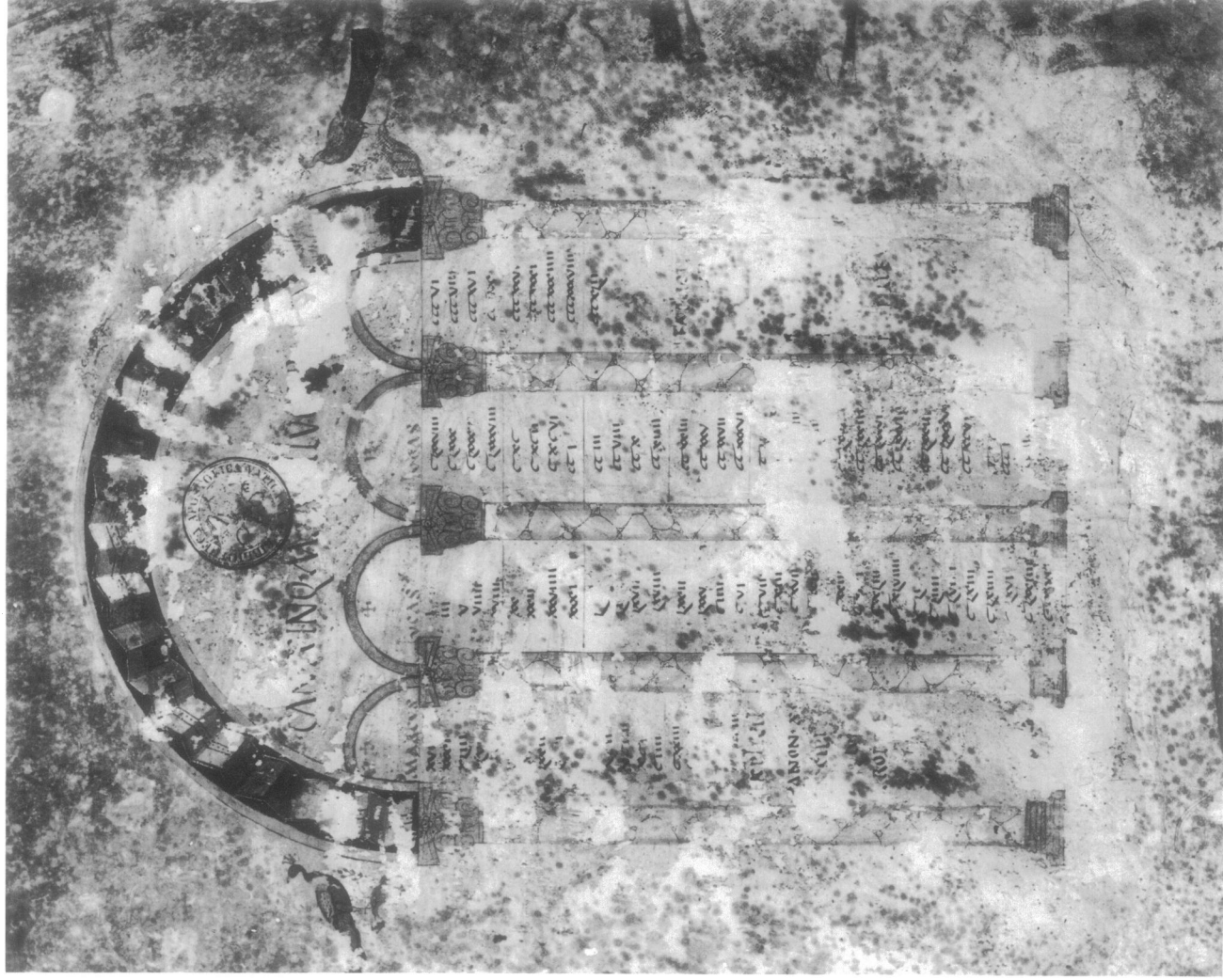


20. Fol. 2r



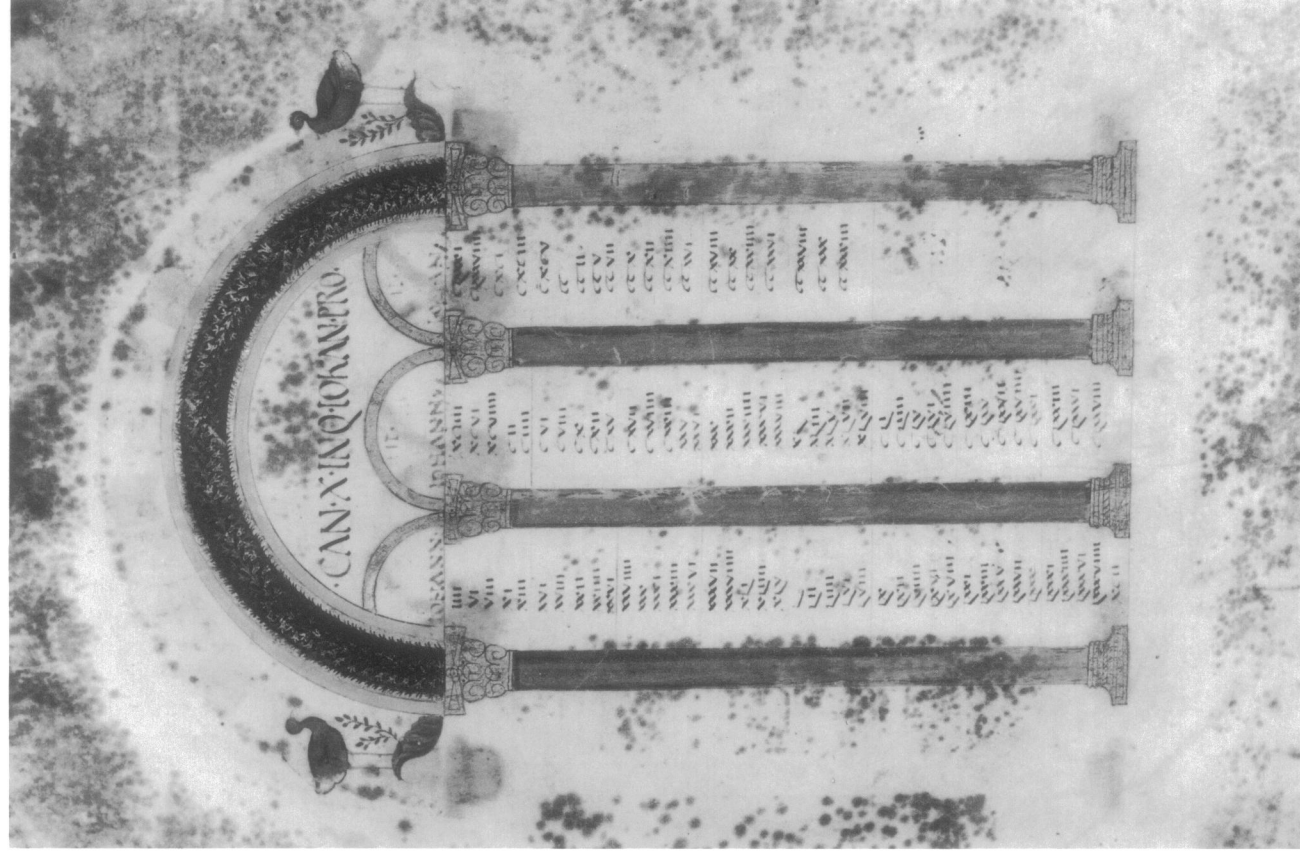
21. Fol. 2v

Vatican, lat. 3806

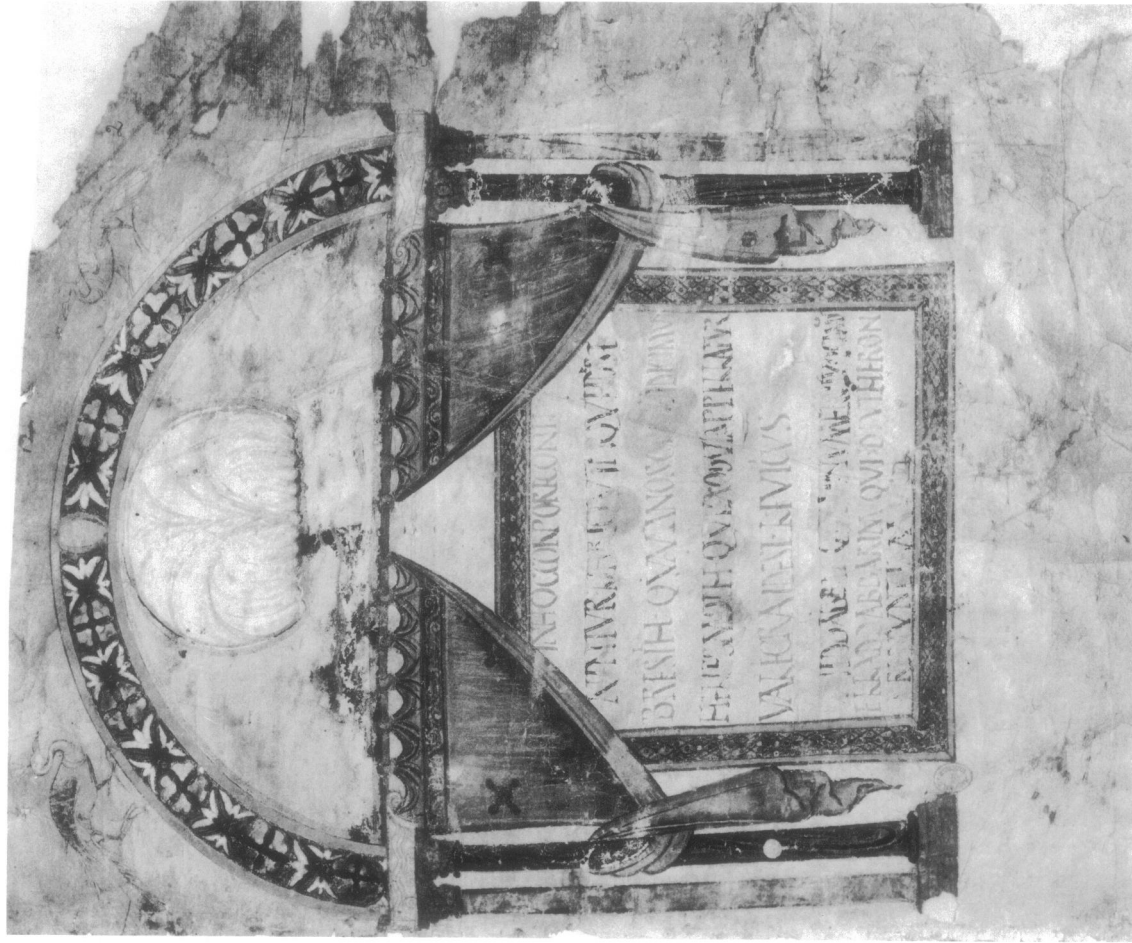


22. Fol. 1^r

Vatican, lat. 3806



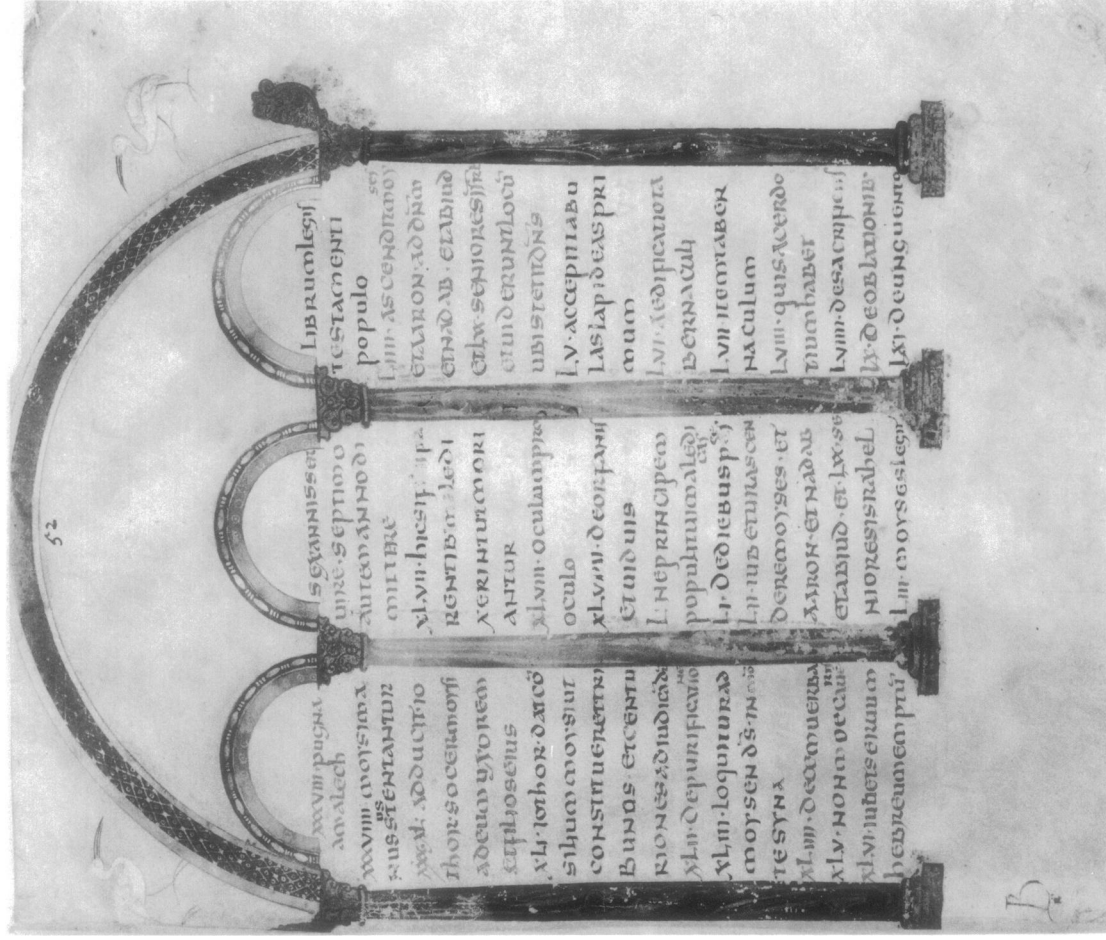
23. Fol. 1^v



24. Fol. 2r, Title Page

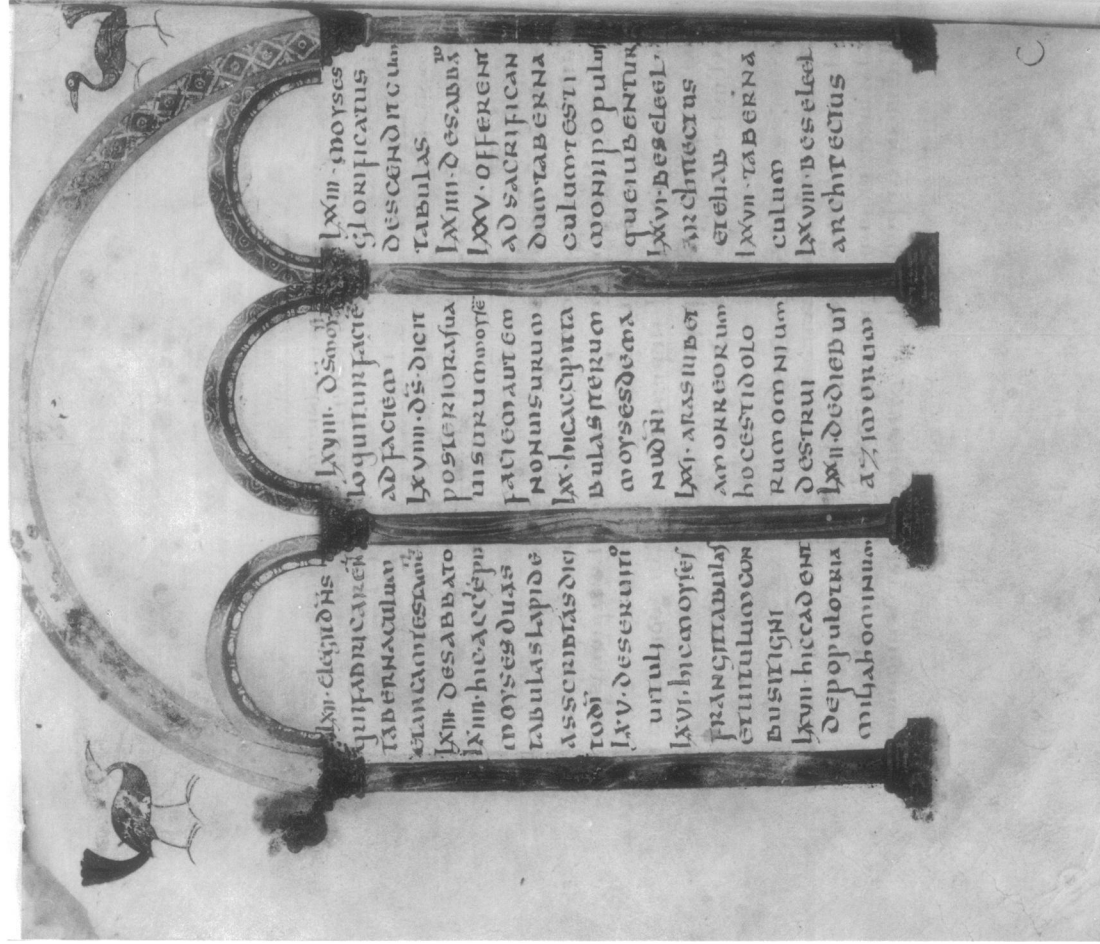


25. Fol. 51r, Chapter Lists to Exodus

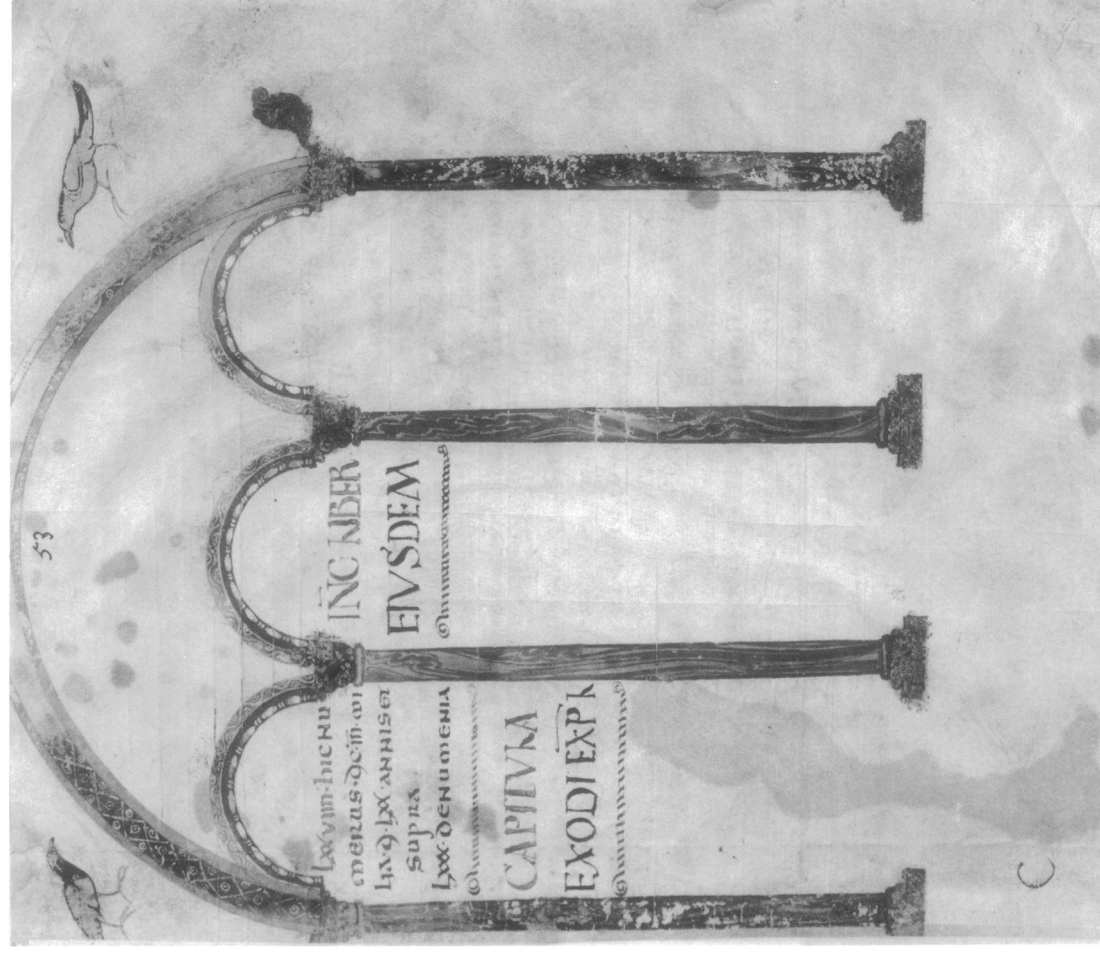


26. Fol. 51^v, Chapter Lists to Exodus

27. Fol. 52^r, Chapter Lists to Exodus



28. Fol. 52v, Chapter Lists to Exodus

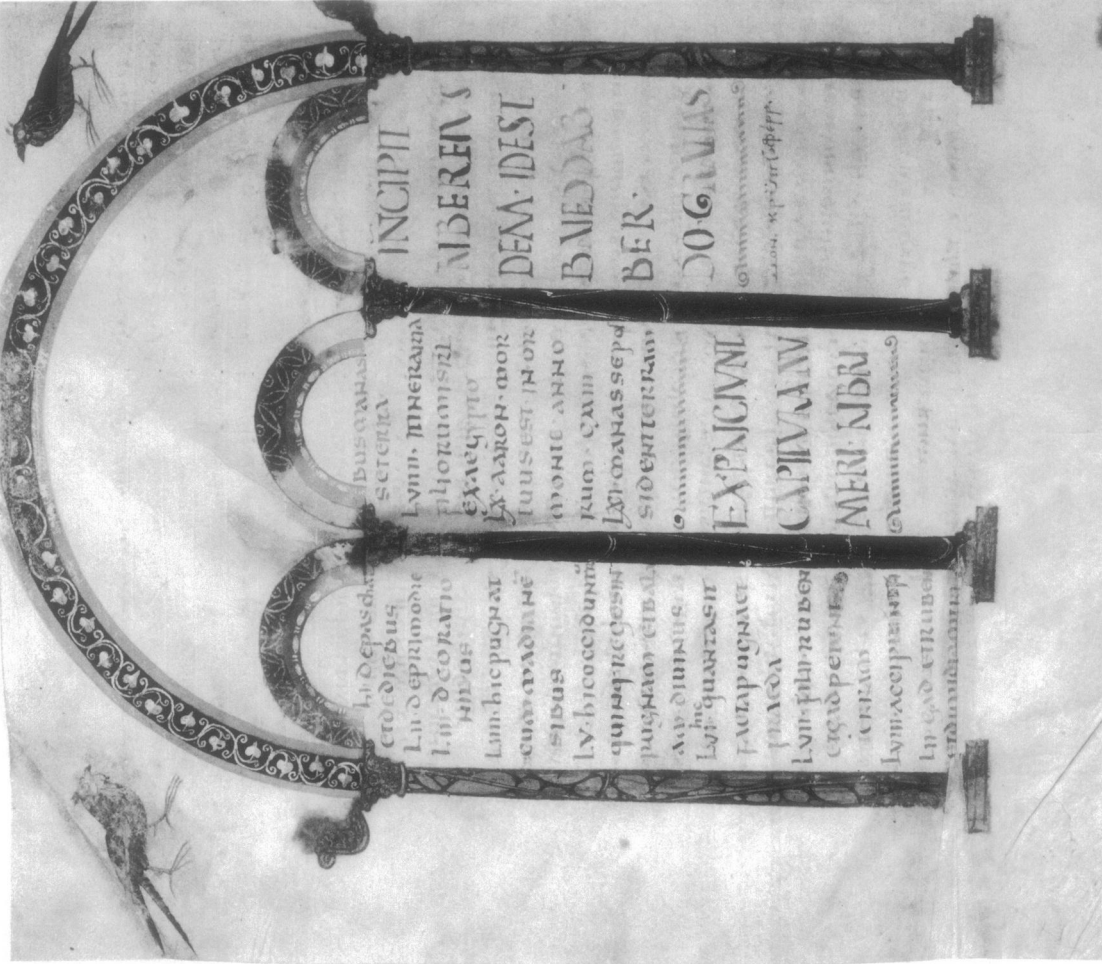


29. Fol. 53r, Chapter Lists to Exodus

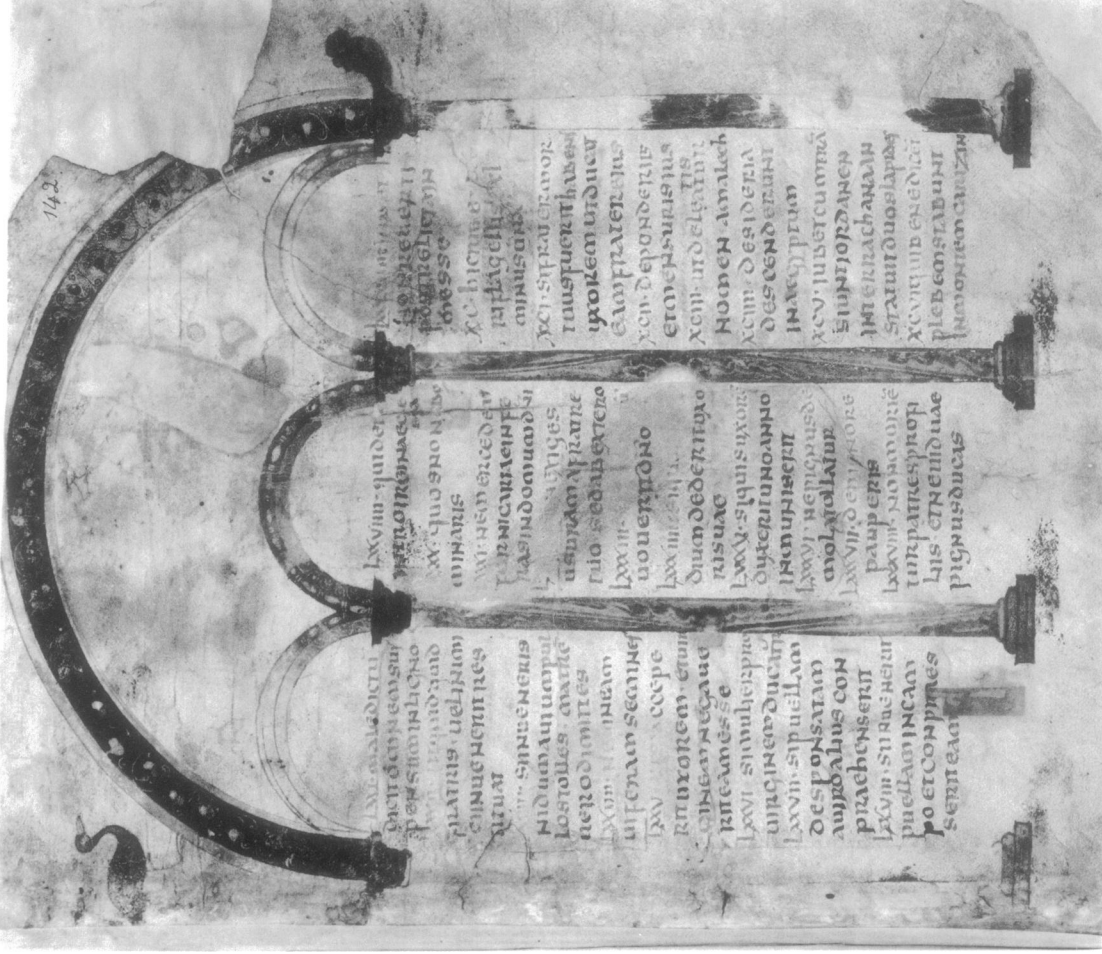


30. Fol. 115^v, Chapter Lists to Numbers

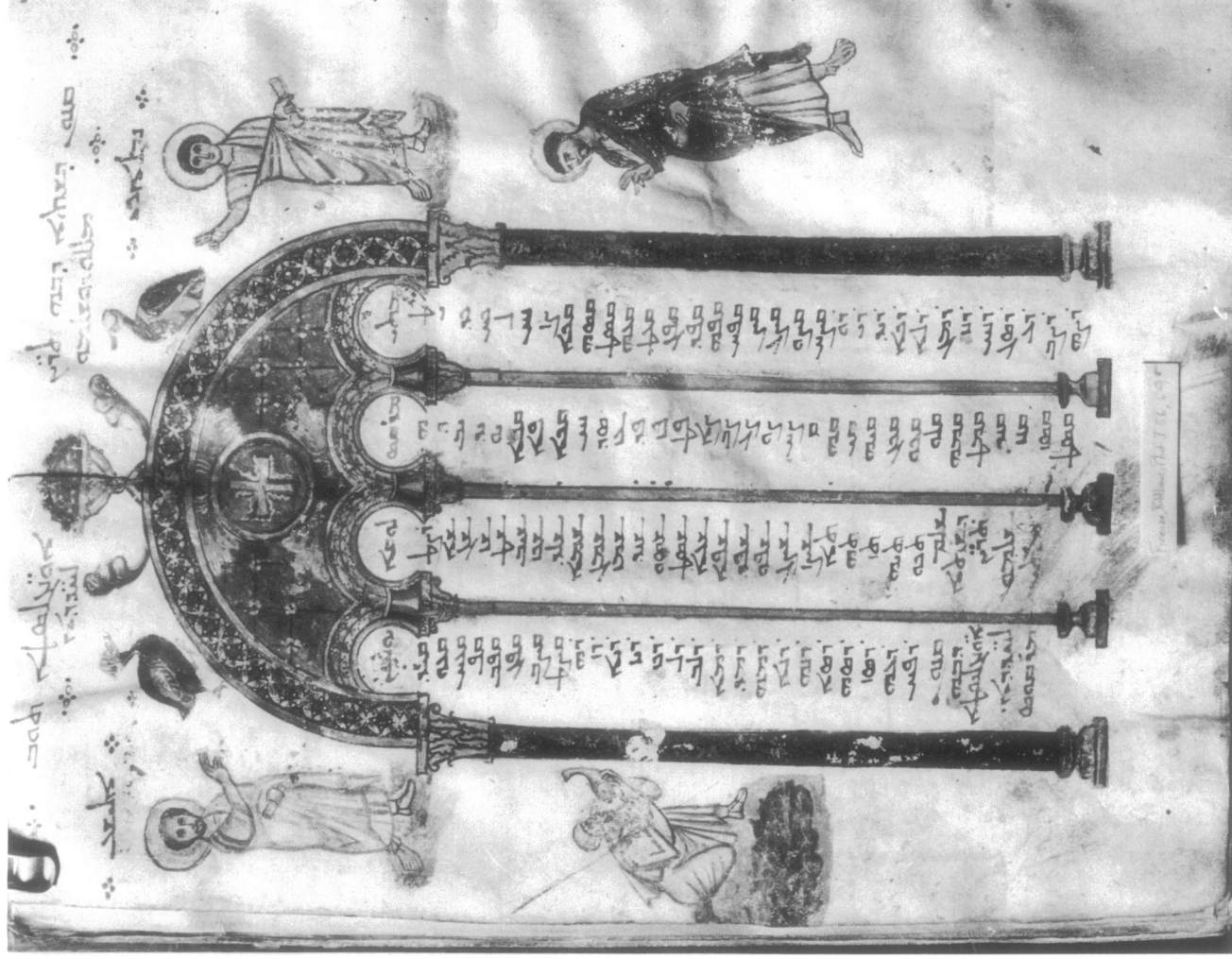
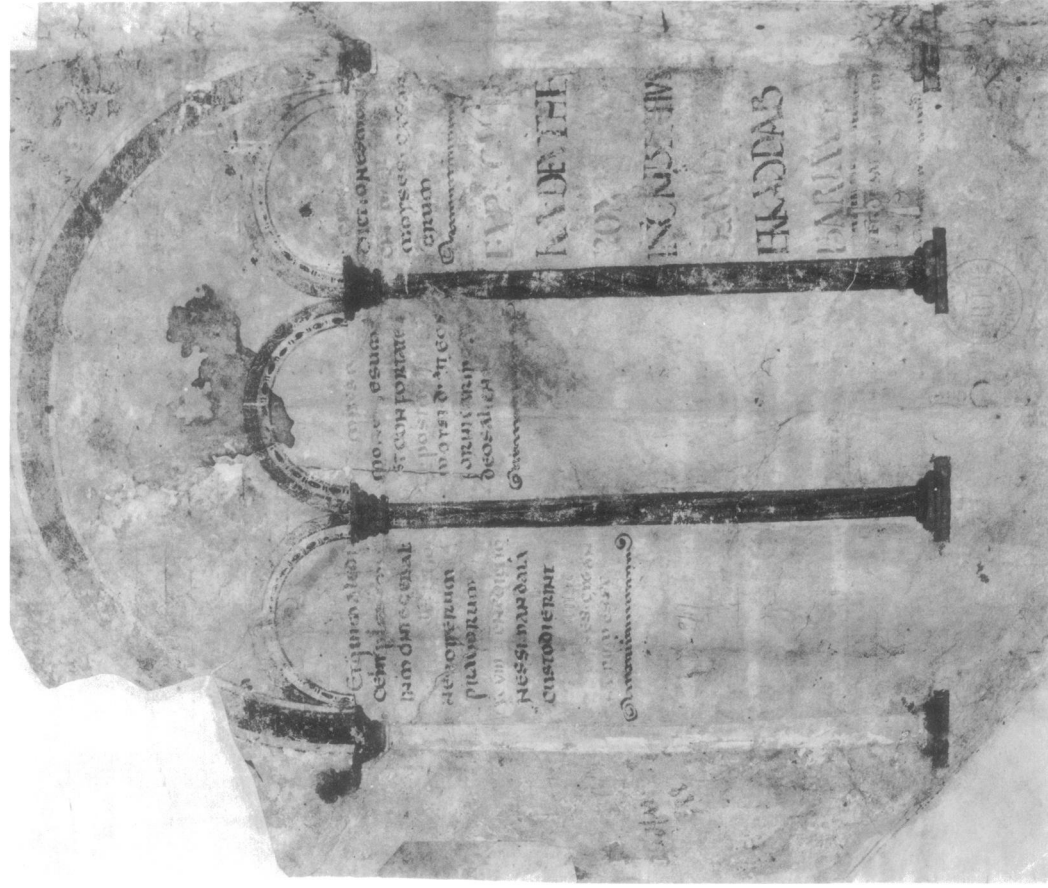
31. Fol. 116^r, Chapter Lists to Numbers

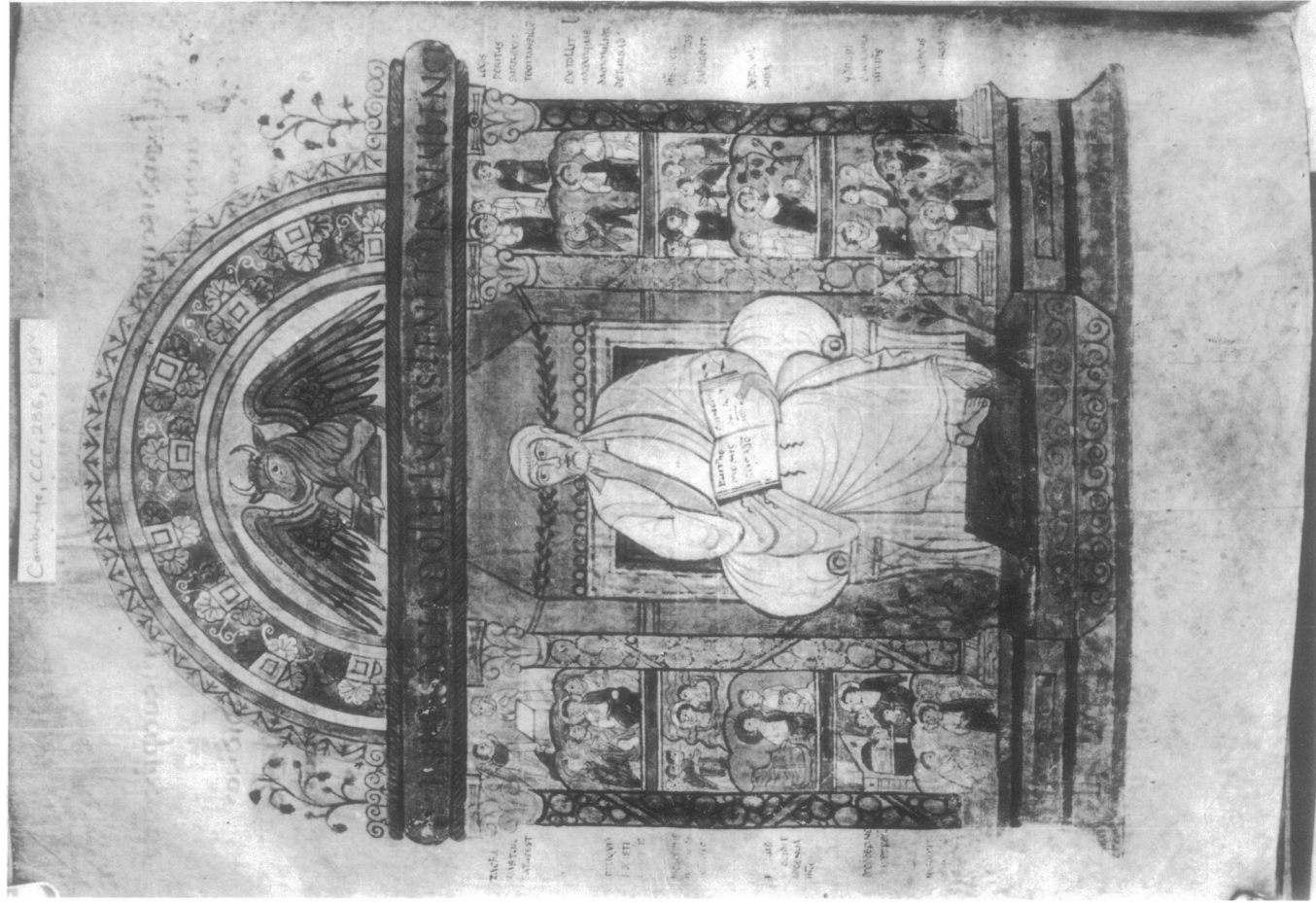


32. Fol. 116v, Chapter Lists to Numbers



33. Fol. 142r, Chapter Lists to Deuteronomy

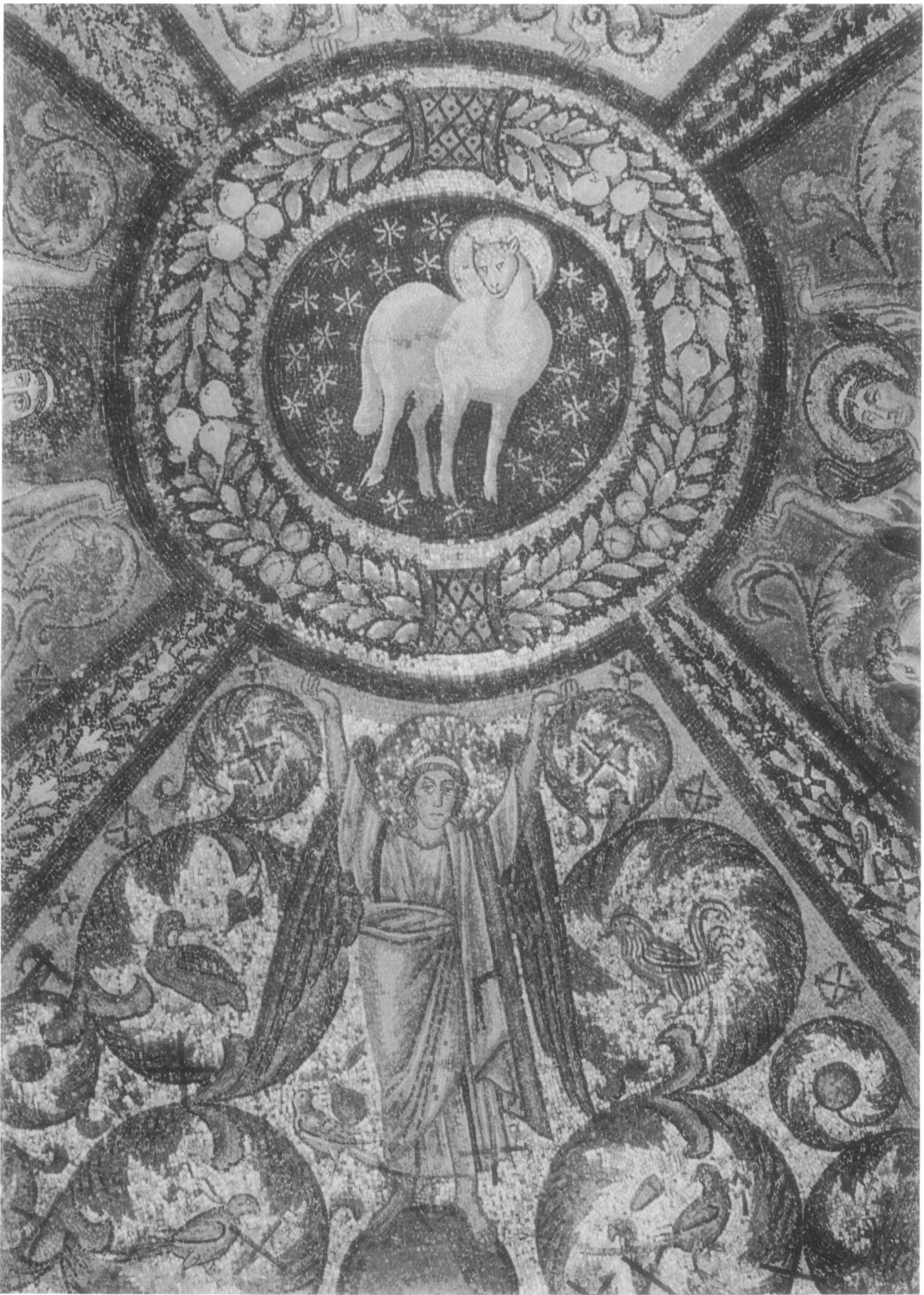




36. Corpus Christi Gospels, fol. 129v, St. Luke



37. Wolfenbüttel Agrimensores, fol. 67v, Author Portrait



38. Ravenna, San Vitale, Vault Mosaic, detail

originally a schematized shadow) are combined into an irregular flat shape. A different flat shape appears on folio 9^v (fig. 18), and on folio 6^r (fig. 17) the bases each consist of three tori without either plinth or scotia. Other folios show different variations of these schemes, none any more correct by classical standards.

In this Italian manuscript of around 800 the outer columns and the enclosing arches all are filled with some variety of interlace pattern, as are portions of the major initials in the book (fig. 19), and nothing could be more foreign to the classical basis of the architectural designs, nor more destructive of the sense of solidity and grandeur intrinsic in the ancient scheme. The inner columns are each painted in a single color without modeling; but once, on folio 9^v (fig. 18), a curious curving pattern was drawn on top of the color.¹⁷ In itself this is scarcely decipherable, but by comparison with the sixth-century fragment (figs. 21, 22) it becomes evident that what seemed an idle squiggle is actually a very debased version of marbleizing. So it is perfectly clear that while the Italian artist of Vat. lat. 5465 still copied the layout and understood the textual arrangement of ancient Canon Tables, he did not understand the grammar of classical ornament, which he occasionally imitated.

III.

We may take the Canon Tables of Vat. lat. 5465 to represent the normal Italian version of classical architectural ornament in illumination executed around 800. We have already found that the Canon Tables of the Codex Beneventanus were illuminated before they were written by the scribe Lupus between 739 and 760. It is immediately apparent that the illumination of the Beneventanus Canon Tables is closer in style to that of the sixth-century fragmentary Canon Tables in Vat. lat. 3806 (figs. 20–23) than to that of the later Italian Gospel Book. Let us pursue the earlier comparison to see just how closely the relationship can be defined.

The Beneventanus capitals follow a consistent formula, which differs from that of the sixth-century fragment only in having two concentric circles in the center of the abacus, instead of a rosette, and in omitting the two dots which appear below the abacus flanking the rosette in the sixth-century type. On the other hand, the Beneventanus capitals tend to be rather strangely proportioned, usually having an abacus distinctly too wide for the bell. Similarly, the Beneventanus bases have the same elements as the sixth-century bases, including a correct distinction between the plinth and the rest of the base, but the details are more clumsily rendered; occasionally, the shaded band around the scotia becomes one of the tori, as on the right outer column on folio 3^r (fig. 4), or may be omitted altogether, as on the left outer column on

¹⁷ On the pages here reproduced the inner columns are all light yellow, and therefore scarcely show on the photographs. The sets of pen lines on the right inner column of folio 5^v (fig. 16) are modern additions in a different kind of ink.

the same page. Again, the acroteria at the bottom of each enclosing arch show the same leafage form found in the sixth-century fragment, but they are painted with more clumsy linear details and without coloristic modeling, and they do not have the growing plant and the standing bird. In each of these details the Beneventanus ornament is very similar to that of our sixth-century standard, but is simplified and slightly less classical.

The column shafts in the Codex Beneventanus are rendered in six different schemes, two of which are also found in the sixth-century fragment. The marbleizing scheme on folio 1^v of Beneventanus (fig. 1) is a coarser version of the one on folios 2^v and 1^r of the sixth-century fragment (figs. 21, 22), while the dark marbleizing on folio 4^r (fig. 6) is essentially a negative image of the same sixth-century scheme. The simple shaded columns on folios 2^v and 3^r (figs. 3, 4) are essentially the same as those on folios 2^r and 1^v (figs. 20, 23) of the sixth-century fragment. Similarly, the enclosing arches of the Codex Beneventanus are decorated in six different schemes, of which four can be found in the sixth-century fragment. The garland of fruit and foliage on folio 1^v (fig. 1) is essentially the same as that on folio 2^v of the sixth-century fragment (fig. 21). The few observable differences, such as the lack in Beneventanus of the fine curving lines between the leaves in the outer rows, or the less convincingly plastic treatment of the fruit, show the Beneventanus version to be a little more schematized, but certainly do not suggest any basic failure to understand the motif. The polychrome square-and-rosette pattern on folio 2^v (fig. 2) has the same elements as that on folio 2^r of the sixth-century fragment (fig. 20), but in Beneventanus the alignment of the squares is different and the rosettes are all complete (instead of partly cut off by the borders), giving a more flattened effect. The leafage garland on folio 3^r (fig. 4) is the same motif as on folio 1^v of the Vatican fragment (fig. 23), but, again, the details of the rendering make the Beneventanus version appear flatter. The folded-band pattern on folio 4^v (fig. 7) is similar to that on folio 1^r of the sixth-century fragment (fig. 22), although the minor linear decoration associated with it is arranged differently, the system of shading is less complete, and the effect is again somewhat less spatial.

The motifs in the columns and the arches of the Codex Beneventanus which do not occur in the Vatican fragment are nevertheless characteristic of sixth-century manuscript ornament. In the Harley Gospels, a sixth-century book of slightly lower quality, there are several mazes comparable to those on folios 3^v and 4^r (figs. 10, 11),¹⁸ there is an organized foliage pattern analogous to the one on folio 2^r (fig. 2),¹⁹ and there are slightly clumsier spiral columns comparable to these on folios 3^v and 4^v (fig. 5, 7).²⁰ Furthermore, a comparison for the vertical squiggle in the columns on folio 2^r (fig. 2) can be found in the fragmentary sixth-century Greek Canon Tables in Vienna.²¹

¹⁸ London, Harley 1775: mazes on folios 6^r, 8^v, 9^r, 14^r; Nordenfalk, *Kanon Tafeln*, pls. 84, 89, 90, 100. On the date, see also Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, II (1935), no. 197.

¹⁹ Harley 1775: foliage pattern on folio 9^v; Nordenfalk, *Kanon Tafeln*, pl. 91.

²⁰ Harley 1775: spiral columns on folio 11^r; *ibid.*, pl. 94.

²¹ Vienna, Cod. 847, folio 3^v; *ibid.*, pl. 43. See also note 31 *infra*.

There is one more motif to be discussed: the small birds painted on top of gold leaf in the hollow spaces of the mazes on folios 3^v and 4^r. They are badly damaged, but they are reasonably legible in figures 10 and 11, where they are reproduced actual size. At the top of each arch there is a long-legged blue and white bird with a green wing standing on one leg while reaching down with its head to peck at the other foot, which is raised off the ground (most legible in fig. 11). This is certainly an ancient motif which gives the impression of being a naturalistic rendering, although the bird's head is turned backward.²² On folio 3^v (fig. 10) the other four birds appear to be Guinea fowl, a motif common to Orientalizing decoration of the sixth century.²³ On folio 4^r (fig. 11) the two birds flanking the one in the center are nondescript greenish birds with red touches, but the other two are easily recognized as essentially the same long-legged bird which perches on the acroteria of two pages in the Vatican fragment (figs. 20, 23). All of this analysis suggests that the Codex Beneventanus arcades are later than those of the Vatican fragment, but not very much later.

IV.

One other problematic Latin manuscript needs to be considered in the context of this decoration: the Ashburnham Pentateuch, famous for its remnants of a vast cycle of illustrations,²⁴ and for its uncial script, which has defied secure localization.²⁵ Its surviving illumination also includes ten pages of arcades enclosing chapter lists (figs. 25–35) and a title page with an enframing arcade (fig. 24). The architecture of the latter is more elaborate than in our Canon Tables, including impost blocks above and a small pedestal below each of the pairs of columns, but the decorative motifs are similar. The floral pattern in the arch is in effect a cousin of that on folio 2^r of Beneventanus (fig. 2) but drawn with less precision and geometric regularity. None of the motifs in the other arcades is an exact duplicate of those we have examined, but all of them fall within the normal range of late antique decoration, including several versions of the vine scroll and a bead-and-reel molding. Similarly, the marbleizing used for the columns, the details of capitals and bases, and the architectural logic in the Ashburnham pages all appear to be clumsier versions of what we have examined in Beneventanus and in the sixth-century Vatican fragment.

²² There are similar birds in the Syriac Rabbula Gospels, dated 586: Florence, Plut. I, 56, folio 4^r; *ibid.*, pl. 131; see also notes 27 and 28 *infra*. But the closest comparison I can cite is in the eighth-century Trier Domschatz Gospels, where the Canon Tables are a particularly close copy of a late antique set: Trier, Dombibliothek, Cod. 134, folio 14^v; *ibid.*, pl. 83; Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, IX (1959), no. 1364.

²³ Cf. Rabbula Gospels, folios 6^v, 7^r, and 9^r (fig. 35); Nordenfalk, *Kanontafeln*, pls. 136, 137, 141.

²⁴ Paris, Nouv. acq. lat. 2334; Oscar von Gebhardt, *The Miniatures of the Ashburnham Pentateuch* (London, 1883); Bezalel Narkiss, "Reconstruction of Some of the Original Quires of the Ashburnham Pentateuch," *CahArch*, 22 (1972), 19–38, with recent bibliography.

²⁵ Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, V (1950), no. 693a, "written apparently in a centre outside the main Latin stream, perhaps in the Eastern region to which Munich Lat 6224 is ascribed." In *ibid.*, IX (1959), no. 1249, the Munich Gospel Book is considered "written by Valerianus in a centre of good Latin tradition, either in North Italy or possibly Illyrium, as is suggested by the general make-up of the manuscript, by its earliest liturgical entries (fol. 46) and its textual affiliations."

The capitals, clearly seen for example on folio 51^v (fig. 26), are a simplified version of our familiar type in which the details of decoration on the abacus are largely suppressed, seemingly obscured by the foliage growing up from the bell, leaving only a vestige of a rosette at the top. This drawing is a bit careless and the proportion of abacus to bell varies slightly from page to page, but one gains the impression that this artist still understood the basic grammar of ornament on a Corinthian capital, while the later Italian artist of Vat. lat. 5465 (as in fig. 18) seems to be struggling with uneven success to reproduce as a two-dimensional pattern a complex and essentially foreign three-dimensional object. The Ashburnham bases also are a simplified version of those in Beneventanus and in the sixth-century Vatican fragment, for they lack the curving scotia which makes the transition from the rectangular plinth to the annular tori, but despite some irregularities in execution these elements remain distinct and recognizable in the direct tradition of classical architectural ornament. The later Italian bases (as in figs. 16–18) are arbitrary variations, mostly elaborated only in two dimensions.

The geometry of the Ashburnham arcades differs slightly from what we have seen in the sixth-century Canon Tables. The enclosing arch on most pages fits uncomfortably on the outer column capitals, for the diameter of the arch is generally slightly less than the distance between the capitals, and the arch is generally less than a complete semicircle; its center may be found as low as the line corresponding to the top of the columns (rather than the top of the capitals). The small arches, on the other hand, are all complete semicircles centered on the line connecting the tops of the capitals; their diameters vary considerably from page to page, but all three will be the same on any given page, and facing pages normally correspond in the sizes and motifs used for arches. The spacing of the small arches, however, is quite irregular, while the capitals with which they connect are uniformly spaced. The difference leads to many awkward architectural disjunctions where an arch may appear mostly suspended over air (e.g., fig. 27), or occasionally two arches may interfere with each other (fig. 33). The junction of the large and small arches on top of the outer capitals can be particularly awkward (fig. 26), for the large arch is usually imprecisely centered on the capital, coming too far inside, and the small arch enclosed within it is thereby pushed further inside, most of it being suspended over air instead of resting on the top of the abacus. In Beneventanus and the sixth-century Vatican fragment this problem is entirely avoided, first by using rigorously consistent geometry in the layout, and second by painting the thin small arches so as to imply that they pass behind the large decorated one.

There is some sign that the artist of the Ashburnham Pentateuch was learning this system as he went along. The first set of arches which he presumably executed for Genesis is entirely lost, but the one sadly rubbed folio surviving from his fourth set of arches (Deuteronomy, folio 142, figs. 33, 34) shows a much closer approach to the Beneventanus layout, despite irregularity in centering the middle small arch on the recto (which is too far to the left, thereby overlapping the left arch while leaving a gap between it and the right arch). There

is also a hint of a learning process in the variations of the height of the arches. The large arches for the title page and for the chapter lists of Exodus have a distinctly suppressed look (figs. 24–29), their centers coming at about the level of the tops of the columns rather than the tops of the capitals, as already explained; but for the arcades for Numbers (figs. 30–32) the center of the large arch comes at about the level of the bottom of the abacus, while on the one surviving folio for Deuteronomy (figs. 33, 34) it comes just below the abacus. In all of the chapter list arcades, as already noted, the centers of the small arches are consistently aligned with the tops of the abaci, and in Beneventanus and in the Vatican fragment both large and small arches are centered on that line.

The geometry of the Ashburnham arcades is strangely careless, but clearly in both pattern and style the arcades are closely related to those of Beneventanus and the sixth-century Vatican fragment. There is one more significant point of comparison here. Each foliate acroterion in the Vatican fragment has a sprig of leafage growing out of it with a bird perched upon it. Neither accessory is found in Beneventanus, but the birds are included on the Ashburnham pages. The important difference is that they are placed up near the top of the page in a sort of implicit spandrel, creating an essentially two-dimensional scheme. They have no physical location. Once again, the classical principles of construction are ignored.

The question now is to interpret historically the distinctions observed in comparing these three sets of arcades. It seems to me the irregular geometry and the carelessness in certain details such as the abacus decoration are best understood as characteristic of a provincial imitation of metropolitan work. The same can be said of this peculiar uncial script. On the other hand, the dislocation of the birds is clearly deliberate and consistent. This seems to me evidence that the Ashburnham Pentateuch is a little later than the Vatican fragment, and I believe that other comparisons of corresponding motifs confirm this conclusion. We have already seen that the Beneventanus arcades seem to be slightly later than those in the Vatican fragment, but I find it impossible to construct a precise argument for the relative chronology of Beneventanus and Ashburnham if we allow for provincial clumsiness in the latter. This is certainly not the occasion for a detailed analysis of chronological indications in the illustrations of the Ashburnham Pentateuch, but I have suggested elsewhere that it would be consonant with the results presented here.²⁶ I conclude, therefore, that all three of these manuscripts should be considered in a sixth-century context, rather than be assigned one to the sixth, one to the seventh, and one to the eighth century.

²⁶ David H. Wright, in *ArtB*, 43 (1961), 250–51. Let me add at this point that I see no specific reason to date the uncial script of the Ashburnham Pentateuch “Saec. VII,” as does Lowe; he dates the very similar script of the Valerianus Gospels “Saec. VI–VII,” and I find that reasonable also for the Ashburnham Pentateuch.

V.

It is time now to reconsider these three manuscripts in a broader art-historical context. There is only one specifically dated manuscript which offers any significant comparison, the Syriac Rabbula Gospels of 586.²⁷ There the architectural designs are quite varied, occasionally fanciful, and distinctly Oriental in decorative effect, but they draw on the same repertory of motifs we have examined. Folio 9^r (fig. 35) comes as close to our type as any of the Rabbula designs, with its marbled outer columns and various geometrical and foliate motifs in the arcade, which resemble those in our three manuscripts. The centers of the enclosing arch and of the four minor arches are all located on one line, but that is placed substantially above the capitals, giving arches which are more than a semicircle. The basic scheme of these arches assumes that the small arches pass behind the enclosing arch (as in Beneventanus and the Vatican fragment) but the alignment of the arches is irregular (as in the Ashburnham Pentateuch). The inner columns and capitals are deliberately much smaller than the outer ones, following a common Syriac type, and therefore not comparable to our type. But the outer capitals on this page come as close to our type as any by Rabbula. This simplification of the foliage covering the bell is different from the pattern we have observed, and the abacus has only a vestigial circle in the middle, but this version clearly depends on the same type of capital as ours, and it does not have the careless obscuring of the abacus we noticed in Ashburnham. The Rabbula bases are actually a more accurate version of a correct classical design (although wrongly proportioned) for the curving scotia comes between the upper and lower torus instead of below the two tori (as in Beneventanus and the Vatican fragment); Ashburnham, it may be recalled, omitted the scotia in its scheme of base.

One other feature seems particularly significant in this design by Rabbula. The decorative birds, foliage, and vase are all shown as resting directly on the top of the arch, and a similar arrangement is found on most of Rabbula's arcades. The space which might have been used for leafage acroteria like those in Beneventanus and the Vatican fragment is here taken over by standing prophets, though acroteria with birds perched on them do occur on two other Rabbula pages (folios 9^v and 10^r) in a quite different architectural design. On the other hand, on about a third of the Rabbula pages birds drawn in a standing or walking posture are well above the arch, as if suspended in air, just as they always are in the Ashburnham Pentateuch. This question of physical location in space is a fundamental issue of style in the classical tradition, and it is apparent again on this page when each of the prophets at the top is given a bit of ground to stand on, while below them at the right Christ in the Miracle of the Stater floats on the page without any physical context. Such inconsistency

²⁷ Florence, Plut. I, 56; facsimile ed. Carlo Cecchelli et al., *The Rabbula Gospels* (Olten, 1959); see also Jules Leroy, *Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures*, Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, LXXVII (Paris, 1964), 139–97. For evidence connecting the dated colophon with the manufacture of the Canon Tables, see David H. Wright, in *DOP*, 27 (1973), 199–208.

is characteristic of Rabbula. In logical development, therefore, the Rabbula Gospels of 586 appears to fall between the Vatican fragment and the Ashburnham Pentateuch. It would be wrong to push this observation toward too precise an indication of date, for Rabbula's work shows both an Oriental taste for rich variegated decoration and strong colors, and a distinctly provincial quality.²⁸ But there is a good hint here that our three Latin manuscripts might well be placed between the middle and the end of the sixth century.

Another Latin manuscript has a few architectural features comparable to ours in an Evangelist portrait, the Gospels in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (fig. 36). Here, the details of the capitals and bases are very similar to those in Beneventanus, but further simplified, as is apparent in the leafage on the bell of the capital. Similarly, although the motif in the arch is not exactly the same as any we have studied, it has comparable elements (compare figs. 16, 2, 3), but it seems less coherent as a design and less capable of three-dimensional implications. It is interesting, however, that plants grow on top of the architecture in the Corpus Christi Gospels. The relationship seems to me close enough, particularly in the capitals, so that we can conclude that Beneventanus is earlier than Corpus Christi. Now the latter can be dated with some assurance on the basis of figure style and circumstantial evidence to the years around 600.²⁹ It is certainly Italian work, possibly Roman, and it characterizes the very end of the living tradition of classical style in sixth-century Italy. The Vatican fragment must be substantially earlier, and Beneventanus at least a bit earlier.

If the period around 600 marks the upper limit for the development I have analyzed, we must now seek to define its beginnings. Unfortunately, there is no simple and conclusive way to do this. It is worth observing that the corresponding details, especially the capitals, in the architectural frame of the author

²⁸ In his long colophon Rabbula tells us that his monastery, dedicated to St. John, was located at Beth Zagba, but that site has not been identified. Suggestions that it was in northern Mesopotamia, as occasionally found in the literature, are without foundation; see Leroy, *op. cit.*, 156–57. The manuscript came to Italy from the Maronite church in northern Lebanon. The oldest record of its ownership appears to be an entry dated 1154 on folio 7^v, translated by Stefano Evodio Assemani, *Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae et Palatinae Codicum Mss. Orientalium Catalogus* (Florence, 1742), 18; at that time it was in the monastery at Mayfūq, in the mountains south of Tripoli. This part of the Mediterranean littoral is a good candidate for the region which originally produced the book. It may be remarked in passing that although much of Rabbula's architectural ornament is too fanciful and Oriental to help in our comparisons with the more restricted range of motifs in early Latin manuscripts, some later Eastern manuscripts show an accurate revival of many of our stylistic features in the tenth century. None of them could be mistaken for sixth-century work, but Nordenfalk uses particularly the Armenian Echmiadzin Gospels and a Greek Gospel Book in Venice (Marciana, gr. I, 8) to reconstruct aspects of their late antique models: *Kanontafeln*, 85–101, etc., pls. 9–10, 16–24. Such an analysis can offer some general confirmation of the discussion presented here. See also the important critique of Nordenfalk by May Vieillard, in *CahArch*, 1 (1945), 113–23.

²⁹ The date of Corpus Christi College MS 286 was persuasively argued on the basis of figure style by Wilhelm Koehler, in *JWarb*, 15 (1952), 64–66; see also David H. Wright, in *ArtB*, 43 (1961), 250–51. The manuscript was in England by the eighth century, specifically in Canterbury by the eleventh. It may well have been one of the books sent by Pope Gregory the Great to St. Augustine (see Francis Wormald, *The Miniatures in the Gospels of St. Augustine* [Cambridge, 1954], 1), in which case it is likely to have been produced in Rome around 600. See also Armando Petrucci, "L'onciale Romana," *StM*, 3rd ser., 12 (1971), 75–134, especially 110–11.

portrait in the Wolfenbüttel *Agrimensores* (fig. 37)³⁰ are more three-dimensional and more correct in terms of the classical canon than in any of our manuscripts. But the Wolfenbüttel book can be dated only on general grounds of style of script and illustration. Lowe considers it "saec. VI in."; Butzmann strengthens this dating and attempts an attribution to Ravenna. Although I would agree with their date, and would place the first of our group, the Vatican fragment, in "saec. VI med.," this is not a specific or conclusive argument. It could also be observed that the wreath frontispiece of the Rufinus in Vienna Codex 847 has motifs somewhat comparable to ours, and that the fragment of Greek Canon Tables bound with it has a wreath frontispiece with a foliate motif significantly comparable to that in the arch of folio 2^r of Beneventanus.³¹ Yet Lowe dates the Rufinus "saec. V ex." and refers to the Greek fragment in passing as "sixth century." In this case I disagree with Lowe on paleographical grounds concerning the date of the Rufinus, for its elaborate and expert, heavily shaded, formal uncial seems to me characteristic of the first half of the sixth century, and I think that Butzmann's analysis,³² although deliberately avoiding a specific conclusion, can be used to support my view. This is scarcely the occasion to attempt a full rebuttal, however; my point is rather to remind us of the difficulty of arriving at a precise chronology of late antique decorative forms if we limit ourselves to illuminated manuscripts.

There are a few dated ivories which offer indirect support. The consular diptychs of Justinian of 521³³ have a luxuriant naturalistic and three-dimensional leafage ornament which is analogous to that of the capitals in the Wolfenbüttel *Agrimensores*; the consular diptych of Apion of 539 continues this tradition.³⁴ Our capital type occurs in a more three-dimensional rendering on the consular diptych of Clementinus in 513 in Constantinople,³⁵ and then in the clumsier Roman copy for Orestes in 530.³⁶ In a general sense it would be possible to gain some confirmation for this suggested chronology from dated silver, but the available comparisons are not specific.³⁷ Among dated mosaics, however, one comparison is quite suggestive: the garland motif with alternating clusters of fruit and leafage decorating the groin and medaillon of the Presbytery vault of San Vitale in Ravenna (fig. 38), presumably dated by the dedication of 547, closely resembles the decoration in the arcades of folio 2^v

³⁰ Wolfenbüttel, Aug. 2° 36.23, folio 67^v. Facsimile edited by Hans Butzmann, *Corpus Agrimensorum Romanorum, Codex Arcerianus A*, Codices Graeci et Latini, XXII (Leiden, 1970); see also the important review by Carl Nordenfalk, in *Kunstchronik*, 26 (1973), 79–83. See Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, IX (1959), no. 1374b.

³¹ Vienna, Cod. 847, folios 7^r and 1^r: Hermann J. Hermann, *Die frühmittelalterlichen Handschriften des Abendlandes*, Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der illuminierten Handschriften in Österreich, VIII (Leipzig, 1923), 38–42, pls. 10, 7. See also Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, X (1963), no. 1491.

³² Butzmann, *op. cit.*, 18–19, etc. Cf. also Wright, *Psalter* (note 10 *supra*), 58–59.

³³ Richard Delbrück, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler* (Berlin, 1929), 141–43, pls. 26–28; Wolfgang F. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, 3rd ed. (Mainz, 1976), 38–39, pls. 12–13.

³⁴ Apion: Delbrück, *op. cit.*, 150–51, pl. 33; Volbach, *op. cit.*, 41, pls. 16–17.

³⁵ Clementinus: Delbrück, *op. cit.*, 117–21, pl. 16; Volbach, *op. cit.*, 35, pl. 7.

³⁶ Orestes: Delbrück, *op. cit.*, 148–50, pl. 32; Volbach, *op. cit.*, 40–41, pl. 16.

³⁷ See Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps*, DOS, VII (Washington, D.C., 1961), 70–77; *idem*, *Byzantine Silver Treasures*, Monographien der Abegg-Stiftung, IX (Bern, 1973).

of the Vatican fragment (fig. 21) and folio 1^v of Beneventanus (fig. 1). Of course, a motif like this had a long history in classical ornament, but the version in this medallion is strikingly close to the version in these two manuscripts, and suggestions of three-dimensionality in the fruit at Ravenna correspond exactly to those in the Vatican fragment, while the Beneventanus fruits are somewhat flatter.

Dating the Vatican fragment in the middle decades of the sixth century makes sense both in terms of the specific dated comparisons we have found and in terms of our general knowledge of Italian art at this time. The famous dated mosaics of Ravenna and Rome show a great revival starting around the beginning of the sixth century and reaching a climax in the middle of the century. The dated ivories from Constantinople confirm this view. But after the Longobard invasion of 568 conditions did not favor major artistic enterprises in Italy, and Roman mosaics in the last generation of the century show a precipitous decline in quality and in their understanding of the classical style. The sequence of three related manuscripts—the Vatican fragment, the Beneventanus arcades, and the Corpus Christi Gospels—would seem to extend from the middle of the century to the very end of it. The supposition that the last of the three may well have been a gift from Pope Gregory the Great to St. Augustine of Canterbury, and the fact that the Beneventanus arcade pages were written upon in San Vincenzo al Volturno, associate the whole group with the region around Rome. The Beneventanus arcades may have been illuminated around the time of the Longobard invasion, and their initial non-completion may have been caused by the social and economic dislocation resulting from that invasion.

The provincial character and the continuing doubt about the localization of the Ashburnham Pentateuch make it impossible to argue a precise date for it on the basis of the style of its script, illustration, or ornament. But its artistic affiliations are entirely with the sixth-century tradition, and give no hint of the Heraclian revival centered in Constantinople.³⁸ That revival soon reached Rome, but there is no clear evidence for it elsewhere in Italy, or in Illyria, Africa, or Spain (the provinces most often considered for the Ashburnham Pentateuch). One medium, the imperial gold coinage, is some help here, for it reveals a general decline in the last part of the sixth century, in Constantinople as well as in the provincial mints of Ravenna, Carthage, Alexandria, and Antioch (which struck considerable amounts of gold).³⁹ By the time of Phocas the low

³⁸ See, in general, Ernst Kitzinger, "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm," *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Munich, 1958), IV, 1; repr. in *idem*, *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West* (Bloomington, 1976), 157–232. See also David H. Wright, "The Shape of the Seventh Century in Byzantine Art," *Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers* (Cleveland, 1975), 9–28.

³⁹ For convenient illustrations, see Cécile Morrisson, *Catalogue des monnaies byzantines de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris, 1970), I, pls. 21–39; or the corresponding sections in *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1966–73).

relief image which under Justinian was reasonably coherent and organic had become entirely flat and linear, and many details of representation had disintegrated into two-dimensional patterns. The process is faster and more severe in the provinces than in the capital. The new classical revival style first appears in gold coinage with the second issue of Heraclius in 613. The style of the Ashburnham Pentateuch is not very far advanced in the analogous process of disintegration, either in its illustrations or in its decoration. The figures, for example, are less flattened and linear than in the Corpus Christi Gospels, but on the other hand they have nothing of the voluminous and painterly quality of Heraclian figure style. Therefore, the Ashburnham Pentateuch must be seen as a close descendent of Justinianic art, most likely executed before the end of the sixth century.

One final issue remains for brief consideration. What do we know of classical survival or revival in eighth-century Italian art now that we have withdrawn the arcades of the Codex Beneventanus? To begin with, it must be admitted that no one ever succeeded in integrating these arcades into a balanced interpretation of the development of Italian art in that period.⁴⁰ Indeed, the middle generation of the eighth century remains almost a blank, except in Roman wall painting, where it is clear from the Chapel of SS. Quiricus and Julitta in S. Maria Antiqua that the style of the painters of John VII lingered on in a flatter and more linear version. In Rome the beginning of the century saw a great artistic revival led by Greek artists, and in northern Italy I would assign a similar date to Castelseprio.⁴¹ But in Rome, in the North, and in Benevento the next great wave of artistic production comes at the very end of the eighth century, or in the early part of the ninth.⁴² Manuscript illumination in the classical tradition seems to show a similar pattern. The great revival movement at the court of Charlemagne is well known, and contemporary with it was a more modest revival in northern Italy, of which the Egino Codex done in Verona between 796 and 799 is the key example.⁴³ There may well have been a revival of manuscript illumination in a few Italian centers at the very beginning of the eighth century, comparable to the revival of wall painting in that period, though the evidence for this assertion depends primarily on postulating lost models with certain appropriate stylistic features by analyzing manuscripts

⁴⁰ In his famous and justifiably severe critique of E. H. Zimmermann, *Vorkarolingische Miniaturen* (Berlin, 1916), Arthur Haseloff raised this point, in *RepKunstw*, 42 (1920), 164–220, esp. 179, 209.

⁴¹ See Wright, "The Shape of the Seventh Century," 26–27.

⁴² Among important recent works, see Cäcilia Davis-Weyer, "Die Mosaiken Leos III. und die Anfänge der karolingischen Renaissance in Rom," *ZKunstg*, 29 (1966), 111–32; and *idem*, "Karolingisches und Nichtkarolingisches in zwei Mosaikfragmenten der Vatikanischen Bibliothek," *ZKunstg*, 37 (1974), 31–39; Belting, "Probleme" (note 9 *supra*), 94–143; and *idem*, *Studien zur beneventanischen Malerei*, *Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und Christlichen Archäologie*, VII (Wiesbaden, 1968). The new publication of the Tempietto at Cividale by Hans Peter L'Orange and Hjalmar Torp is expected shortly. See also Barbara Bernhard Anderson, *The Frescoes of San Salvatore in Brescia* (diss. Univ. of California, Berkeley, 1976).

⁴³ Berlin, *Phillipps 1676*. Lowe, *Cod. Lat. Ant.*, VIII (1959), no. 1057; Belting, "Probleme," 126–31; Anderson, *op. cit.*, 215–27.

of the Carolingian period.⁴⁴ But there is no evidence for an important living tradition of classical style in Italian illumination continuing from the period around 700 through to the period around 800. The modest initials of the Codex Beneventanus, a little clumsy in execution, are exactly what we should expect in the middle of that time span.

Recognizing the arcades of the Codex Beneventanus as a "late antique original" of the second half of the sixth century saves us from having to explain them as an isolated anomaly. They are too accurate to be the kind of copies we know from the eighth century, and they lack the inventiveness and variations we know from the subsequent Carolingian *renovatio* of classical manuscript illumination.

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⁴⁴ E.g., Belting, "Probleme," 131–42; Florentine Mutherich, in *Der Stuttgarter Bilderpsalter* (Stuttgart, 1968), II, 196–200; Anderson, *op. cit.*, 177–84. For a more general review of this and related problems, see Carlo Bertelli, "Stato degli studi sulla miniatura fra il VII e il X secolo in Italia," *StM*, 3rd ser., 9 (1968), 379–420.